

Abracadabra

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Summary: Nishinoya was annoyed after Hinata unintentionally insulted him for being short. So one night he made a silent wish, that is, to be taller than his kouhai. And it is a dream that came true " well, not in the way everyone expected. [Warning!: fem!Hinata reverse harem]

1. Chapter 1

****Title: Abracadabra****

****Ship: fem!Hinata reverse harem :3****

****Plot: Noya was annoyed after Hinata unintentionally insulted him for being short. So he made a silent wish, that is, to be taller than his kouhai. And it is a dream come true " well, not in the way everyone expected. ****

****Note: Haikyuu isn't mine. Forgive me for any error in grammar and spelling. Oh, and you'd probably be wondering why I came up with this. I just love Hina-chan, and I really like the team shortlegs of Karasuno. :3****

****Anyways, douzo!****

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****Chapter 1****

****The Cause:****

Nishinoya Yuu was currently being haunted by his conscience. He felt

as if his soul was burning in hell although he was still alive. His heart felt ripped apart mercilessly by wolves and his brain ached like it was shrinking into nothing.

That was how great his crime against Hinata Shoyo had been.

So what happened?

It all began last Friday evening somewhere in Miyagi prefecture, when Karasuno Highschool Men's Volleyball Club finished their daily practice.

"Here, everyone. My treat."

"Waaah! Pork buns!"

"Thank you very much!"

"Tsukki, here's one for you!"

"Ah. Thanks."

"Oi, Hinata! Why are you eating ahead of everyone?!"

"Don't you first year boys know how to RESPECT YOUR SENIORS?!"

"Tanaka-san, you're too loud!"

"Uh! Suga! Daichi looks angry now!"

Nishinoya could only laugh while watching his team mates fool around outside the coach's Foothill Store. And why not? All of the senpais were there: Azumane Asahi, Sawamura Daichi, Sugawara Koushi, and Tanaka Ryuunosuke. Then there were the freshmen: Kageyama Tobio, Tsukishima Kei, Yamaguchi Tadashi, and the shorty Hinata Shoyo.

Shorty. Insult intended.

"Noya-senpai!" the petite, orange-haired spitfire of a kouhai approached the team's Guardian Deity, unintentionally implying the (not-so-huge) gap between their heights.

"The snack tastes good! Can I have yours?"

A vein pulsed in Nishinoya's forehead. Somehow the first-year shrimp has been blessed with a few centimeters' length of bone, so he was taller than him. The libero suddenly recalled the moment when Hinata had actually mistaken him for a kid at the training camp.

"No way in hell." Noya ate his pork bun as quickly as possible.

It was strange that height issues got into Noya's nerves that evening. Even weirder was the fact that he was irritated at the fact that Hinata, his kouhai, was taller than him, a senpai. Nishinoya was not the kind of guy who fussed about such trifle things. He had always ignored his size before. He was, after all, an exceptionally-skilled libero. Everyone acknowledges him once they see his moves "like the Rolling Thunder. As well as its newer version,

the Rolling Thunder " Again.

Nishinoya naturally noticed his strange behavior himself. Hence he mulled about it as they all began to walk home.

"NOYA-SENPAI!" Hinata, who was an enthusiastic idiot, ran to his side, interrupting the shorter boy's thinking.

"What?" Nishinoya grunted uncharacteristically.

Hinata either did not notice the change in the other boy's tone, or he simply ignored it. "Our practices have gone well, nee? I think we're ready for the next match!"

__**Of course, I know that**__,_ Nishinoya thought without responding.

"Those guys are gonna get surprised when someone as small as you beat their attacks!"

__**Of course, they'll be surprised when someone as "the curse word hit Nishinoya like an arrow.

"Oi, Hinata! How dare you " the libero was about to scold Hinata, had the orange-haired freshman's attention was on him.

"Waaah!" Hinata was looking up the night sky instead. So did the other guys.

"Cool! Meteor shower!"

"At this early?" Tsukishima wondered, with a hint of interest in his brown eyes.

"Why not? It's quite dark already." Sawamura replied.

"Ah! We need to make a wish!" Hinata abruptly shut his eyes close and clasped his hands in prayer.

Nishinoya looked up at the sky, now decorated with beautiful shooting stars which light quickly came and went.

He wanted to make a wish as well.

He closed his eyes, and thrice he spoke in his mind that he wanted to be taller than his kouhai.

Guess what, his dream came true.

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****The Effect:****

Noya's wish quickly took effect, indeed.

The next day, Kageyama Tobio went to Hinata's classroom to invite the

latter to practice receiving during lunch time. To his surprise, the orange-haired shrimp was not around. He asked one student and found out that Hinata did not attend the classes that day.

It was the first time that Hinata did not come to Karasuno to attend classes, so Kageyama was quite worried.

**Weird,** he thought, and wondered if the short boy was sick.

He was thinking about Hinata's probable reason for being absent that day when he accidentally ran into Nishinoya at the hallway.

"Kageyama!" Nishinoya greeted with a wide grin.

"Senpai." Kageyama replied with a slight bow.

The libero immediately noticed the look of concern on the freshman setter's face.

"What's wrong? You look preoccupied." Nishinoya asked worryingly.

"Nothing." Kageyama answered. "Hinata's absent today, that's all."

"Eh?" Even Nishinoya was perplexed upon hearing the news. "Did something happen to him?"

Kageyama simply answered with a shrug.

"Hmm." Nishinoya wondered for a moment if his moodiness last night had something to do with it.

"I wonder if the captain knows about this." Kageyama spoke thoughtfully.

"We can tell him about it later." Nishinoya smiled.

"At club time."

"Right." Kageyama nodded in agreement.

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The club room of the men's volleyball team was in a two storey apartment-like stone gray building that was separate from the school building. The building was used mainly for the sports clubs of Karasuno High. Here the club members could hold some meetings, keep their own stuff and do whatever activity they must do.

That afternoon, just after the cleaning hours, Kageyama walked to the building and climbed upstairs to the second floor, where their club room was.

"K-kageyama!"

Kageyama looked up, startled. He heard a high-pitched voice spoke. He looked over his shoulder and noticed a fluff of bright orange hair jutting out of the corner of the sports club building.

A vein pulsed on Kageyama's temple.

"Hinata you idiot, why didn't you attend classes?!" he walked to the back of the building. He was supposed to beat the crap out of the short-legged shrimp, but he stopped when he saw Hinata looking upon him in a desperate manner.

It made Kageyama feel uneasy.

"O-oi," the raven-haired setter gave Hinata a look, "why are you looking at me like that?"

Hinata's big brown eyes were brimmed in tears. His mouth was quivering, as if on the brink of a major breakdown.

"K-kageyamaâ€| " he spoke in a shaky voice.

Kageyama raised an eyebrow, puzzled. "Your voice sounds higherâ€|likeâ€|a girlâ€| "

He asked Hinata a question out of mere curiosity. Plus, he wanted to throw a slight insult because Hinata did not attend school that morning.

"Are you undergoing late puberty?"

Hinata's brown eyes gradually became pools of tears. He snuffled and held them back, but the remark seemed to have a major impact on the smaller boy that he burst into tears all of a sudden.

"THAT'S BECAUSE I DID TURN INTO A GIRL!" Hinata wailed in desperation.

"My voice became higher because I became a girl!"

Kageyama could only gape at such revelation.

"â€|WHAT?"

He was totally dumbfounded.

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****Uh-huh! My first Haikyuu fanfic!****

****I'm not so familiar with the whole series yet, so do please forgive me if I haven't portrayed the characters well.****

****Mind if you leave a review?****

2. Chapter 2

****Hiyaaa!****

****This is chapter two. Kudos to 00JellaNilzzZ (I hope I spelled it right) for being a wonderful adviser (and a slight spoiler, but since I need a lot of info to make things as canon as possible, it's okay XD). I probably could not form a proper plot without you.****

****Here you go, minna. I hope you like it!****

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 2****

****More Effects****

When Nishinoya arrived at the gym, he was baffled to find his fellow club members huddled in one corner. Usually he would see them practicing ahead of him, every single one of them full of energy as if they did not have classes earlier that day.

"What's up?" Noya casually approached his team mates. They were standing together, forming a tight wall of humanity. Through the slight gap between the captain Sawamura and the vice captain Sugawara, the libero thought he saw a kid being cornered by the boys.

None of the other members had noticed Nishinoya's arrival. They were too engrossed in talking to the person they've just cornered. It was a serious, man-to-man talk, the one that usually ends up in trouble like in the movies.

"Hinata," Sawamura Daichi spoke in a worried tone, "this is a prank, right?"

Hinata?*** Nishinoya arched an eyebrow. He was sensing trouble.

"Oi, oi, why are you cornering Hinata?" he yelled. "That's bullying!"

Suga looked back at him and gave a nervous smile. "Nishinoya, you're here! Uhâ€|no. We are not bullying Hinataâ€|"

The silver-haired setter's answer puzzled Noya even more. "So what's going on?" he asked.

The other club members finally broke the human wall they have formed around Hinata. Noya stared at his kouhai and immediately noticed something strange.

It was a strange thing which he found awesome, at first.

"Waaaaah!" Noya ran towards Hinata like a whirlwind. He grabbed the ginger-haired shrimp's shoulders, which felt slimmer and fragile.

"I'm taller than you now!"

"GET YOUR HANDS OFF HER, NOYA!" Daichi suddenly burst into volcanic anger, which startled the libero.

"Why are you pissed at me?" Noya whined defensively. He then smirked when he thought the captain made an error in grammar. "And it's 'him', not 'her'."

"You're wrong there, senpai." Tsukishima spoke with an amused smile that irritated Hinata.

"Hina-chan is now a girl!"

"Shut up!" Hinata blurted out, but Tsukki's smile widened even more at the sound of her feminine voice.

Hinata's voice had simply confirmed it all. Noya looked at him "no, her" and he could not avoid dropping his jaw in shock.

"WHAT?"

Kageyama sighed. "That's what I also said at first."

Nishinoya stared at Hinata from head to toe, repeatedly. She has a wild mane of orange hair and big brown eyes, just like yesterday. But she was a few inches smaller than him, and her figure has changed a little. It was not much obvious because of the loose black shirt she was wearing that day, but upon close inspection, you can say that she has the curves of a woman.

Hinata Shouyou, the super-hyper, ginger haired, short-legged, high jumping, super spiking, perfect decoy becomes a girl?

__**Just what the hell is going on?*_

"Ano, I'm wondering!" Yamaguchi said hesitantly.

"How did Kageyama-kun confirm that Hinata became a girl?"

All of the guys stared at Kageyama, whose face suddenly became scarlet.

"Indeed." Daichi was curious as well. "How did you find out?"

Of all the people in the gym, it was Tsukishima who came up with an answer. "Unless Kageyama ordered Hinata to show him!"

"Don't tell me!" Tanaka grabbed the collar of Kageyama's shirt. "You pervert! How could you molest your own team mate?!"

"What?!" Kageyama choked, because of shock and of the strong hand gripping him. "No way I would do that!"

The raven-haired setter could just feel the burning stares that all of his senpais were giving him.

"Really?" Tanaka narrowed his eyes at Kageyama, then looked over his shoulder at Hinata. "Hinata. Did this guy make you take off your clothes?"

Kageyama looked over at Hinata pleadingly. And why not? He'd been charged for a crime he was not guilty of.

Hinata shook her head innocently. "No." she said, being an honest kid that she was.

Kageyama sighed in relief. He thought he was safe from persecution by his seniors.

Too bad Hinata was sometimes too honest for anyone's own good.

"He groped my chest, that's all." Hinata continued, not thinking that what she said would be the death of her own team mate.

Kageyama blanched in horror. Indeed, he had palmed Hinata's chest a while ago before they went to the gym, but it was simply because he did not believe in Hinata's words. He thought that the team's decoy was only kidding.

_**Who among us would believe that Hinata magically turned into a girl, anyway? **_He thought.

"Oi! I did not do that on purpose â€" " Kageyama did not have a chance to explain himself.

All of the senpais' auras drastically changed into that of deadly demons. Even the cowardly Asahi and the kind Sugawara finally showed their dark side to the unfortunate Kageyama. They loomed over the freshman setter as if they were about to send someone to hell.

"Tanaka. Our kouhai needs to be punished." Daichi spoke darkly. Obviously, the captain was the worst demon of them all.

"C-captain. Sawamura-san. Let me explainâ€|" Kageyama's voice shook in fear of his life.

"Sure, Hinata was a guy. But how could you grope your own team mate?"

"I-I did not do it on purpose!"

Seconds later cries of agony could be heard at the gym while the seniors punish Kageyama.

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It has only been a day since Hinata turned into a girl, and the men's volleyball team has already gone nuts. Much of the senpais became

overprotective older brothers, Kageyama experienced the ultimate torture ever, and Tsukishima's snarky comments doubled in number.

**All because of this freak transformation,** Hinata thought, and she heaved a sigh.

"Why me, of all people?" she (let's use she from now on, shall we?) whined.

Nishinoya heard her complain, and regret immediately crept into him like a haunting nightmare.

**She became a girl because of me,** he thought with a frown.

**If the others find out, I'mâ€¦!**

Nishinoya's eyes drifted to Kageyama, who huddled in the bench area. He was uncharacteristically pale and was shuddering in terror, thanks to the punishment he received from his seniors.

**I'm dead.**

Nishinoya gulped, as if he could swallow his fear away. No one should find out that he had something to do with Hinata's magical gender switch.

"Nishinoya-senpai."

"It's NOT MY FAULT!" Nishinoya blurted out as he jumped like a surprised cat. He looked over his shoulder and saw Hinata looking at him with wide brown eyes and arched eyebrows.

**Those eyes lookedâ€¦different this time.**

"Not your fault?" Hinata asked, puzzled. She tilted her head to one side in curiosity. "Are you all right, senpai?"

**Noya, calm down, the ginger newbie has no ideaâ€¦!**

"I'm fine!" Nishinoya said with a strange grin.

At this, Hinata gave him one of her usual sunny smiles. This time, however, now that she was a girl, it has formed a different impact on Nishinoya. Such a sunny smile from someone like Hinata Shouyou was to Nishinoya an explosion of light but flustering emotions. For some reason he could feel his breath being taken away, and his heart beat sounded louder than ever.

Nevertheless, her smile made him feel so good inside.

**I'm in big, BIG trouble here,** the libero of Karasuno thought as he hid his scarlet face from his kouhai.

Indeed, Nishinoya was in big trouble. He had no idea how big it was, honestly.

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"We're in big trouble here," Daichi spoke promptly.

After the craziness in the gymnasium because of Hinata's gender switch had finally settled down, the team decided to hold a serious meeting. It was, by all means, a significant one. The moment everyone had realized what happened to their ginger-haired decoy, they knew they were in a crucial situation.

It was unfortunate that at that time, Coach Ukai the Younger was away with Takeda-sensei. They were making preparations for the upcoming practice matches against Nekoma High and what Tanaka has deliberately named "City Boy Alliance", a group of premier high school volleyball teams. The managers, Shimizu and Yachi, were not around as well.

"So Hinata has become a girl. Which simply means that she cannot play volleyball with us in his " uh"her state." The captain spoke in a grave tone.

Everyone who looked at the captain was shocked and speechless about his sudden announcement.

"EEEEEEEEEEEEEEH?" Hinata cried, aghast. She was definitely the most affected of them all. "What do you mean I can't play?"

"It's simple logic." Tsukishima said matter-of-factly with arms folded across his chest.

"You're a woman. This is men's volleyball team. You're not that stupid, are you?"

Hinata glared at the tall young man and pouted. "I understand what the captain is saying!" she spoke angrily.

"Calm down, you two." Suga was the one to mediate as usual. "We're working on a situation here."

Somehow the two freshman middle blockers quieted down because of their senpai's persuasion.

"If our goal is to stand in the court until the end, we need to play full force." Daichi continued speaking.

"That means we need everyone's skill. That includes your decoy abilities." His eyes drifted to Hinata, who then put up a serious face.

"When you freshmen played in the Interhigh, everyone has changed their opinion of Karasuno. Which resulted to us being back as one of the powerhouse teams in the prefecture. Hence we shall expect that all the other teams will take us very seriously in the Spring Tournament. However" | "

Hinata could feel some chills running down her spine. The onslaught was about to arrive.

"Now that our decoy's in this condition, we are, shall we

sayâ€|_**impaired**_."

Suga nodded in agreement. "Without Hinata, we are lacking in offensive power."

The rest of the team quickly understood what they meant. Hinata being off the court meant that there will be no Hinata-Kageyama team up, to make freak quicks for the team. Moreover, without such decoy, Asahi and Tanaka have less chances of making their own scores.

"Damnit!" Tanaka screamed angrily. "Just how the hell did Hinata become a girl anyway?"

It was a question they would all want to know, especially Hinata.

"It's possible that you are a hermaphrodite in the first place." Tsukishima told Hinata.

"H-herma what?" Hinata raised an eyebrow, baffled.

The tall, blond guy looked down at her and smiled wickedly. "My bad. I shouldn't have said such complex stuff to you. Did I just fry your brain?"

"What â€" you jerkâ€|." Hinata gritted her teeth in utter irritation. The tall middle blocker had already pissed her off more than twice in a row that afternoon.

"Tsukki, you're being so mean todayâ€|" Yamaguchi spoke, hoping to put an end to his friend's biting remarks.

Hinata nodded quickly in agreement with Yamaguchi, before giving Tsukishima an angry look. Mind you, Hinata was now a girl, so you could simply imagine how cute that angry face turned out instead.

Tsukishima, however, simply snorted at the sight of it. "Moe," he mumbled.

"What?" Hinata pursed her lips in confusion. She had no idea what the tall guy was talking about.

"That's enough!" Daichi had had enough of their bickering.

Both Hinata and Tsukishima were immediately silenced by the captain, although the shorter middle blocker kept on giving hostile looks at the taller one.

"So, our biggest problemâ€|" Kageyama spoke â€" he had finally returned to life after that punishment, thank heavens.

"â€|Is how to bring Hinata back into a guy. But more than thatâ€|I think we should also see another problem, when we play those practice matches soon."

"Yeah! That City Boy Alliance!" Tanaka blurted out. The way he said _"city boy"_ sounded so wrong and so hilarious, it had brightened up the ambiance in the gymnasium for a while.

"Speaking of which, the practice matches with Nekoma will be held a week from now." said Sawamura.

Hinata frowned. "Nekoma Highâ€|they're expecting us. All of us."

All of a sudden a feeling of frustration crept into the cheerful ginger-haired decoy. She has been looking forward for the practice matches with Nekoma High. _"Cats versus Crows: The Battle at the Trash Heap"_ , as people call it. She was even making a huge effort now in passing the mock exams just to make sure she will make it to Tokyo and play once again with Nekoma's setter, Kozume Kenma. The last time they played, Karasuno had lost, but she had promised Kenma that she and her team mates will win next time.

**I've been looking forward to playing them in Tokyo, butâ€|**

"Hold it, there. Why do you look so sad Hinata?"

She felt a hand slam her skull as Nishinoya suddenly patted her head with a little too much energy.

"Nishinoya-senpai." Hinata was surprised in spite of herself.

Nishinoya gave his kouhai one big, inspiring grin. "Keep your chin up, Hinata! Boy or girl, you're coming to Tokyo with us!"

At this, the ginger haired decoy cheered up. "Osu!" she nodded with a bright smile.

Nishinoya chuckled, with the purpose of hiding his anxiety. He knew it was his fault that Hinata became a girl. Generally, it was not his fault at all, but since he had wished to a shooting star that Hinata become smaller than him, the libero thought that the gods wanted to mess with him by making his kouhai switch genders.

**I doubt I can find a solution to this problem right away,** Nishinoya thought.

**Right now, the best thing I can do is help Hinata out as much as possibleâ€|**

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The next day was Sunday, and Hinata woke up late because there weren't classes that day.

"Shou-chan! Wake up! The breakfast will get cold soon." Her mother shouted from the kitchen.

**Shou-chan? That's how they call me now?* A vein pulsed on Hinata's forehead. Apparently her own family had quickly got used to her being a girl.

_**If anything, I think they actually liked me the way I am right

nowâ€¦|**_

She got out of her bed and washed her face in the bathroom before going to the dining area. Her mother was in the kitchen and her father was not around, so the only person sitting by the table was her little sister, who greeted her with a beaming smile.

"Good morning, onee-chan!"

Hinata returned the greeting with an awkward smile. "G-good morningâ€¦|"

Hinata sat down with her sister and began eating breakfast. She was halfway done eating the Japanese breakfast of fish, rice and miso soup when the bell ring.

"Shou-chan, there are people outside!" her mother called.

"I'll get it." Hinata shouted back. She then went outside to check.

Before the entrance to their house stood two cute girls, a tall, lovely girl with deep black hair and a beauty mark close to the side of her lower lip, and a smaller, petite blond girl carrying a sweet smile on her face.

Hinata blushed at the sight of the two girls. "Yachi-san! S-shimizu-san?"

Both Shimizu Kiyoko and Yachi Hitoka greeted her good morning.

"C-come in!"

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When Yachi and Shimizu came inside the Hinata residence, they were greeted by Hinata's mother and sister.

"Are you friends with onee-chan?" Hinata's sister asked.

Yachi smiled awkwardly at this question. "Onee-chan?"

Hinata sighed. "Let's just talk in my room."

She brought the two managers into her room. Hinata's room was simple: a bed by the window, a desk by the left wall, and a wardrobe for her clothes. It was clean, and without decorations.

"What brings you here, Shimizu-san, Yachi-san?" Hinata did not bother to beat around the bush.

"Errâ€¦|" Yachi glanced at Shimizu, as if pleading for help.

Shimizu handed out a huge paper bag to Hinata. "Here."

"Eh?" Hinata took the parcel and opened it. Inside were two sets of school uniform.

Two sets of female school uniform, to be precise.

"What's this?" Hinata already knew the answer, but she asked anyway.

"School uniforms." Shimizu said in an even tone.

"Umâ€|those are my extra uniforms, actually." Yachi added. "We heard from the captain, and I thought you could use a bit of change in your wardrobe."

"Uhâ€|well." Hinata was not certain whether she would cry or not. "Thanks a lot, butâ€|I'm known as a guy at school, remember?"

"Takeda-sensei has covered that for you." Shimizu spoke as she pushed the eyeglasses she wore closer to her face.

"In Karasuno you'll become an exchange student."

"That's ridiculous! I may have turned into a girl, but everyone will still think I'm Hinata Shouyou."

"No. Hinata Shouyou is in another school starting Monday. He will only come back once you return to being a boy."

"But I don't wanna wear girl's clothes!" Hinata yelled desperately. She was very sure that all the guys in the volleyball team will be teasing her once they saw her in girl's clothes.

"It's inevitable, Hinata-chan. You're a girl and you need girl's clothes." Shimizu said pointedly.

Yachi nodded in agreement. "Besides, you've a smaller figure now, Hinata-chan. You need to wear something that will fit you perfectly."

The word 'smaller' pierced Hinata's heart like ice pick on jelly. She never thought that her height issues could get any worse.

"Speaking of clothes, does Hinata-chan already have female undies?" Yachi suddenly asked.

"Eh?" Hinata was taken aback by the question.

"You knowâ€|lingerie?" Yachi went on, raising an eyebrow in wonder.

Hinata's cheeks turned bright pink as she answered her question by abruptly shaking her head.

"None?" Yachi was appalled.

"None at all." Hinata replied.

She stared at the two managers, and was surprised at their reaction. Shimizu had the most serious look in her face, as if Hinata had said

that she was going to die. Yachi, on the other hand, seemed panic-stricken, as if not owning lingerie was the worst phenomenon in the world.

"We NEED to buy you some!" The two managers shouted in unison.

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Uh, wellâ€|this is my first time exceeding a thousand words per chapter. I guess writing a Haikyuu fic is different from writing Kuroko no Basuke fic.

Umâ€|review? Onegaiiâ€|

3. Chapter 3

(EDITED: 8/27/2014)

Yo!

So you've read this far? Thank you very much! I know I might have made some changes in the manga's plotline, making it slightly non-canon, but then again as I have already warned you, this is a reverse harem, so it was, somehow, inevitable.

Anyway, if you appreciate this, thank you so much!

Now, I've made some stuff which 00JellaNilzzZ would call "squeal-worthy" moments. I just hope they areâ€|

Douzo!

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Chapter 3: Out of this World

Hinata's week could not get any weirder.

When she came into Karasuno wearing her female school uniform â€" black skirt, buttoned-up blouse, and a cute pink bowtie â€" she thought that she would be the laughingstock of the entire school. Much to her surprise, however, everything was normal. No one asked what happened to the male Hinata nor inquired about her identity.

**Shimizu-san and Yachi-san were right**, she thought, and she felt relieved somehow.

For some unknown reason, Takeda-sensei managed to get her into

Karasuno High without any trouble. By without any trouble, it meant that the teacher managed to talk his way to the principal about her enrollment and "Hinata Shouyou's absence". Takeda-sensei may not have the knowledge in volleyball, but he sure has a lot of other talents. He's quite the persistent and persuasive guy.

So Hinata got to peacefully prepare for the mock exams. It was unfortunate that the teacher did not get to make her an exception in the incoming tests, but you can't get everything in life, after all.

Now, all Hinata had to do was to make sure she will pass the mock exams, or else she won't come to Tokyo until she had finished the supplementary classes.

It was an easy job.

Not.

For the first time in her life, Hinata ventured into the silent jungle of Karasuno High school's library. It was a milestone, a special event worth recording, to anyone who knows her long enough.

Nevertheless, to study hard for an exam was not an easy job at all, for an airhead like her.

The moment she began reviewing, she was immediately faced by an adversary in the form of a tall bookshelf.

She craned her neck up high, at the thick textbook stuck in the topmost niche of the wooden ledge.

Hinata could not suppress gritting her teeth in annoyance. Her height was getting in her way once again.

She stood on her tiptoes and reached out her hand as high as possible. It was at this point that she felt bad about the few centimeters that she had lost when she turned into a girl. She wanted to jump and spike the book out of the shelf, but she would risk toppling the entire bookshelf and squashing anyone on the other side.

Making a huge effort in trying to get the book, Hinata could feel her joints straining when she felt a pair of hands securely held her hips and lifted her up until she got the textbook out of the shelf.

"Oh, thanks a lot" " Hinata looked over her shoulder and was shocked to see Tsukishima.

"What " Gyaaah!"

Hinata struggled to release herself from the tall blond guy that she almost fell. Luckily, Tsukishima got to save her, catching her a second before her butt landed on the floor.

"Ow" Hinata winced.

"You idiot." Tsukishima muttered as he helped the ginger-haired girl stand up. "Look what you've done to yourself."

"It's your fault for surprising me." Hinata replied, irritated.

"Hey, I helped you get your book, didn't I?"

"You should've just gotten the book from its slot for me instead."

Tsukishima gave her a smug smile. "I don't want to hurt your pride."

He had perfectly shot another slur at her, this time about her height. Hinata pouted her lips in annoyance. The tall guy has been aiming more insults at her lately.

"Well, now that you're here—" she said, as she preferred to ignore his stinging remark this time. "Please help me out with my studies."

"I already said that I'll only tutor you during my business hours." Tsukishima said, exasperated to be asked again. He had been helping both Hinata and Kageyama in studying for the exams after class hours, and the oddball duo had been asking him to tutor them during lunch breaks as well.

"Come on, I need to pass the exams," Hinata pleaded. "Will you help me? Pleeaaaaaaase?"

Tsukishima stared at her for a moment, with a face that revealed no expression or anything. Hinata had no idea what the tall blond guy was thinking. But if she had the power to read his mind, she would find out that Tsukki was actually pondering about her — how she cute looked in her female uniform, how her always bright smile now have a different, a more powerful effect on other people, how strange it seemed that the team mate that he loved to tease was now an adorable young lady.

Tsukishima was only thankful that she could not read his mind.

He shoved his black-rimmed eyeglasses closer to his face as he answered her, "Fine. Just this once."

"Seriously? You're gonna help me?" Hinata's face brightened up, and gave him a sunny smile. "Thanks!"

The sun is now smiling at the moon,**** Tsukishima thought delightedly, **_**how strange.**_**

"Moe." He murmured, with a hint of a smile playing on his lips.

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Kageyama was tense, as usual. He walked outside to where the vending machines were, his face contorted in deep, serious thought. Everyone

who came his way immediately moved aside; they did not want to mess with someone who looked so angry in a bright Monday.

Well, Kageyama Tobio has a lot of problems in his mind that his face looked like he was planning to start a war.

The top problem he has been pondering about was Hinata Shouyou.

Just thinking about what happened to him, uh, her was enough for him not to concentrate on which drink he should get at the vending machine. He simply pushed a random button, but fortunately he got banana milk, the one which he usually buys. Apparently his instinct did the work for him.

Hinata turned into a girl.**** The idea still had not sunk in Kageyama's mind just yet.

Now that she's a girl, how can Karasuno compete in the Spring High without her? If he magically became a girl, will she magically return to being a boy? If so, when will it happen?****

"Kageyama!" he suddenly heard Hinata's cheerful voice.

Speak of the devil,**** Kageyama thought as he took a sip of the milk using a straw.

"Oi, Kageyama!"

"WHAT?" Pissed, Kageyama quickly turned around.

He totally squirted out his drink when he saw Hinata in her female school uniform.

"H-hinata?" he asked, totally surprised to see her in girl's clothes.

H-he looks cuteâ€¦!****

"We're supposed to go studying, remember?" Tsukishima loomed behind Hinata, much to Kageyama's chagrin.

"Nee, Kageyama! Glasses is going to teach me outside business hours!" Hinata said excitedly.

"Wanna join us?"

Kageyama arched his eyebrows at the tall, blond guy in surprise. He could not help but wonder how Hinata had easily persuaded Tsukishima to tutor her.

"What's the matter, King?" Tsukishima glared at the raven-haired setter.

Kageyama quickly returned the hostile look.

"Nothing." He glanced away from them.

"I'll pass. I'm busy right now. I'll just join the group study after class."

"Eh?" Hinata frowned. She was puzzled at his reaction. She expected Kageyama, despite his pride, would allow Tsukishima to teach him in order to pass the exams and come to Tokyo.

"Don't mind His Majesty. Let's go." Tsukishima shoved his eyeglasses to his face and walked away.

"Ah. Okay..." Hinata followed, skipping as she walked beside the tall blond guy back into the building.

They both left Kageyama, who crumpled the box of milk he had just finished drinking. He was frustrated with himself.

He was asking himself why he felt so irritated seeing Hinata and that eyeglasses jerk Tsukishima together.

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At that time, Nishinoya was sitting at his desk in his classroom. He was unusually silent, and worse, he was unusually serious. All of his classmates were nervous around him because naturally, Nishinoya is a very cheerful guy.

Of course, they were nervous because they have no idea what was wrong with Noya.

Truth be told, there was nothing wrong with him. He was only thinking.

Thinking about Hinata.

**Is there anything I can do?** Nishinoya thought. He furrowed his eyebrows in deep meditation. Since he thought it was his fault that Hinata became a girl, he believed that he should be the one to find a way to turn Hinata back into a boy.

He had faced the screen of the computer all night, searching for some scientific answers on the Internet. But since they were _**scientific**_, Nishinoya ended up having a headache the next day.

"DAMN IT!" he suddenly yelled at the top of his lungs, scaring everyone around him.

"Noya!" Tanaka Ryuunosuke suddenly came running to him, carrying a wide, toothy grin.

"What?" Nishinoya glared at him. He was definitely in a foul mood.

Tanaka grimaced at the Guardian Deity's strange reaction towards him. "What's with you?" the wide grin on his face returned afterwards.

"By the way, I've heard news from Yachi. Hinata's wearing a female school uniform today!"

Nishinoya's foul mood quickly vanished.

"What?!"

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The supposedly peaceful lunch break at the first year classrooms were suddenly disturbed by a pair of second years.

"HINATAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA!" Nishinoya and Tanaka shouted at the top of their lungs as they searched for their underclassman's homeroom.

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In class 1-4, Hinata was taking up English lessons from Tsukishima when they heard the noise.

"What was that?" Hinata looked up from the textbook she has been reading.

"Just concentrate on studying." Tsukishima answered, not giving a damn about what was going on outside.

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Yachi Hitoka was on her way to her homeroom when Nishinoya and Tanaka encountered her.

"Yacchan!" Nishinoya skidded into a halt before her, panting wildly after running all the way from his own classroom.

"Y-yes?" Yachi spoke nervously. She could feel all the other first year students stare at the three of them.

"Where's Hinata?" Tanaka asked in an eager tone.

"Hinata?" Yachi looked up, thinking. "I remember seeing her with Glasses-kun a while ago."

Tanaka grinned. "Hinata's with Tsukishima? Great. That glasses jerk must be enjoying himself now, teasing that shrimp."

Noya smiled at the other guy. "Tsukishima should not be the only one to enjoy!"

Yachi narrowed her eyes at the two upperclassmen. "You're going to make fun of Hinata for wearing a female school uniform, aren't you?"

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Hinata and Tsukishima were halfway done with the English lesson when they heard a ruckus happening outside class 1-4.

"Seriously," Hinata could no longer focus on the lesson. "What's happening outside?"

They both glanced at the doorway and saw a glimpse of two boys being pulled away by a girl.

"Tanaka-san, Noya-san, stop!" Yachi tried with all her strength to keep the two second-years away from the homeroom, but to no avail.

"No way we're gonna miss this." Tanaka had his cell phone ready in his hand. "Hinata! Come out here!"

"Eh?" both Hinata and Tsukishima were frozen, dumbfounded.

"Tanaka-senpai and Noya-senpai?" Hinata's eyes were wide with shock.

"Hinata! Why are you in Tsukishima's classroom?" Nishinoya said out loud. "Are you wearing a female school uniform?"

Hinata's cheeks burned red from embarrassment. She was hoping that her seniors would be more civilized and hold the topic about her uniform until club time when there are only the team members around, but some guys are just not patient enough to wait for the perfect time to insult their friends.

**They're here to laugh at me, huhâ€¦!**

"Don't bully Hinata!" Yachi pleaded.

"Are they seriously this pathetic?" Tsukishima deadpanned. He massaged his temples to ease himself of the headache, that was, his two senpais.

"Hinata, just go out and shut them up."

Hinata glanced at the tall middle blocker with teary eyes and quivering lips. "I-I don't wanna go out thereâ€¦!"

Tsukishima maintained a straight face despite the deep urge to pull out his phone and take a picture of her. "If you won't come out, they will come in."

"B-butâ€¦!"

Tsukishima sighed. "Just tell them that Sawamura-san will hear about this later on."

Hinata somehow thought that it was a clever suggestion, so she stood up from her seat and reluctantly approached the doorway.

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"Oi, Hinata, have you finally decided to " Nishinoya was about to start making playful remarks at Hinata, when the cutest thing in the world suddenly appeared at the doorway of class 1-4. A lovely girl who was more or less an inch shorter than him appeared the way the sun comes out of hiding from the back of the storm clouds.

" " come out?"

The libero gaped at the adorable creature before him. They did not expect this at all.

**What the f-?*

"Hinata..?"

Hinata stood at the doorway, with her arms trying to cover herself from embarrassment and her cheeks rosy red as she shyly stuttered. "S-s-sawamura-san will h-h-hear ab-b-bout this"

"Huh?" Tanaka was so stunned, he had already forgotten about taking pictures of his kouhai in female school uniform.

Hinata huffed, and when she managed to gather enough courage, she said, "I'll tell Sawamura-san that you're bullying me, your underclassman!"

The two senpais did not respond to her threat at all. They simply stood there, frozen, as if an angel had appeared in front of them.

Well, that's not far from what they were seeing.

**Holy crap,** Nishinoya thought. _**Even Hinata's supposedly nervous look is very cute!**_

Tanaka on the other hand, instinctively backed off. This guy was totally unprepared to see such an unusual form of beauty. "O-oi"Noya"

"We need to retreat, Ryu!" Nishinoya ran away at full speed.

"W-wait for me!" Tanaka swiftly went after him.

Both guys sped away like a pair of torpedoes going the wrong way, passing through the wide berth given by all the freshmen at the hallway who were scared to even accidentally bump into them. Hinata and Yachi watched the two upperclassmen leave the floor in the blink

of an eye.

"I did not scare them away, did I?" Hinata asked.

Yachi answered her with a shrug, "I have no idea, honestly."

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When Nishinoya and Tanaka arrived at the gymnasium, they were faced with an angry trio of seniors: Sawamura, Sugawara, and Azumane.

"W-what's going on?" Nishinoya looked at each of the three senpais. They all have the same angry look as when they have punished Kageyama last week.

"I've heard from Yachi." Sawamura said in a dark tone.

"You two have ventured into the first year classrooms in search of Hinata?"

Tanaka had the most awkward smile on his face. "W-we're not doing anything wrong, senpai!"

"Oh, really?" Sugawara's toothy grin had a hint of wickedness in it. "I heard you were planning to take pictures of Hinata while she's in her female school uniform."

The two second-years shuddered. They have never seen the third years look this angry before. Beads of sweat ran down Nishinoya's forehead as he resorted to seeking the support of the senpai Azumane Asahi, who was probably the mildest of them three.

"A-asahi! Calm them down!" Noya pleaded.

"Sorry," Asahi replied coldly, "but whoever harasses Hinata is going to get punished. That has been the rule ever since."

"What rule?" Noya and Tanaka asked in unison. Both of them were definitely puzzled. Just who on earth made a rule that protects Hinata?

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"Who on earth made a rule about protecting Hinata?" Tsukishima asked. He and Yamaguchi were taking the volleyball gear out of the storage room while watching Nishinoya and Tanaka, who were in sheer agony because of the third years' punishment to them.

"I heard Shimizu-san and Yachi-san conversed something about women's rights to Coach Ukai and the third years last week." Yamaguchi

said.

Tsukki scowled. "Women's rights? What for? Hinata's a guy, the entire team knows that."

Yamaguchi shrugged. "But they can't help it. Hinata has thisâ€|_**strange charm**_â€|ever since the transformation. I guess they're only trying to keep the boys out of trouble."

"Strange charm?" Tsukishima arched his eyebrows in wonder.

Yamaguchi nodded. "Yes. Everyone gets affected by it, especially the guys," he gave his friend a suggestive smile afterwards.

"Even _**you**_ are affected by it, Tsukki."

"What?" Tsukishima's eyes were wide with surprise. For a moment he gave Yamaguchi an incredulous look. But the tall middle blocker gave a short laugh afterwards.

"Yamaguchi, I never thought you could make such a funny joke." he said.

Yamaguchi knew better than to press his friend any further. "I'm glad you find it hilarious."

But he was not joking at all.

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"Kageyama! Let's race to the gym!"

It has always been a tradition of the oddball duo to have a race â€" be it first to get to the gym, or the first to take a bath, or the first to enter the volleyball court â€" they would always compete against each other.

That afternoon, however, both seemed to be in contrasting moods. Hinata was cheerful and lively as always, but Kageyama was unusually quiet.

"Kageyama?" Hinata glanced upon the tall, raven-haired guy. "Are you all right?"

Kageyama did not even look at her in the eyes as they walked together. "Yeah, I'm fine. How did the study go?"

"It went well!" Hinata grinned. "I almost lost hope in learning English, but I did not know Glasses could be so good at teaching."

Kageyama frowned at her. "Whenever he was teaching us during club time, you always complained about how much of a jerk he was."

Hinata shrugged. "I guess he's in a good mood during lunch time."

**I don't think so,** Kageyama thought.

"The King and Queen are here." Tsukishima shouted when the oddball duo arrived at the gymnasium.

Hinata looked at the tall middle blocker in wonder. Kageyama, on the other hand, was blushing madly as he spoke angrily, "Shut up."

Hinata, not understanding Tsukishima's metaphor, asked the raven-haired setter. "What's he talking about?"

"Nothing." Kageyama was glad of the gingerhead's naïveté.

"Ooh, Hinata, you're practicing with us?" Suga spoke happily.

"Of course I'm practicing!" Hinata replied with a quick nod. She then noticed Nishinoya and Tanaka in one corner of the gym.

"What happened to Tanaka-senpai and Noya-senpai?"

"Don't mind them!" Sugawara said a bit too cheerfully.

"Let's begin our training!"

"Osu!"

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There you go. Sorry for the late update. I hope you don't mind the errors in grammar and whatnot.

**00JellaNilzzZ: thanks for the review. Gosh, the word 'peals' was a total error. I probably mixed up its meaning with some other word. To avoid misunderstanding, I replaced it with the word 'beads'. As for the quotation marksâ€¦hehe, I tried to edit them, although I believe I missed a lot of those awkward-looking quotations you've mentioned in your review. **

Note to readers: please leave a review. I'd love to hear your suggestions.

4. Chapter 4

EDITED (8/23/2014)

Hello! I'm thankful for the follows and favorites, as well as the very helpful reviews.

NOTE: as I'm saying, I'll try to stick to the original plot as much as I can, but since this is a reverse harem, there might be some changes.

**Oh, for those who are wondering who will be involved in this

reverse haremâ€|nope, I won't tell anything!**

BTW Chapter 4 is HERE!

Douzo!

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Chapter 4: Asking for a Girl's Hand

"Here we are."

"Sawamura, are you sure?"

"The address says so. I think this is the place."

"Hell yeah! Let's go inside!"

"â€|Shouldn't we ring the bell first, Tanaka-senpai?"

"What for? It's Hinata's house!"

"That's exactly why we should ring the bell first!"

It was a chilly, Friday evening when the members of Karasuno High Men's Volleyball Club: Sawamura, Sugawara, Azumane, Tanaka, Yamaguchi, Tsukishima, Kageyama and Nishinoya, stepped in front of the Hinata residence. With their tense posture and the awkward look in their faces, they looked like a team of suitors who were about to woo a lady which, in this case, was the ex-man and teammate, Hinata Shouyou.

So how on earth did this happen?

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Just Wednesday of the same week, Hinata spoke to the captain about their upcoming Tokyo trip.

"I know it's too early for me to think of this as a problem, butâ€|" Hinata said in a worried tone.

"â€|I don't think I can come to Tokyo, senpai."

Sawamura was appalled by this announcement. Of all the members, Hinata was the one most excited about the journey.

"What? Why?"

Hinata scratched her head, not knowing how to explain everything to the captain.

"Uhâ€¦wellâ€¦it's my parentsâ€¦"

Each of the members of the team were handed a letter to be given to their parents, as a means of asking permission to go to Tokyo for the practice matches. Problem was, Hinata's parents were afraid of allowing their 'daughter' to go out on a trip 'together with so many boys'.

"So that's your problemâ€¦" Sawamura smiled awkwardly. He felt bad for the ginger-haired underclassman.

Hinata gave a nervous laugh, "My parents are kinda weird, that's for sure. If I've been a guy, they would totally let me go to Tokyo with the rest of the teamâ€¦" She then frowned and spoke in a sulky tone.

"I hope I can convince them to allow me."

"Hmmâ€¦" Sawamura looked up and stroked his chin as he thought of a plan.

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"So that's why we're here?" Kageyama asked, in a slightly annoyed tone. _**How come Hinata hadn't told me about this?*_

Sawamura took a step forward and rang the bell once. He waited silently afterwards.

"I wonder if Hinata's already home?" Nishinoya asked in a concerned tone. Hinata had left the gym earlier so that she could prepare for her teammates' visit. The libero wondered if the orange-haired decoy managed to come home safely.

"I don't get it," said Tsukishima, "you're only going to convince Hinata's parents to allowâ€¦" he was getting frustrated as to what to call the ginger-haired shrimp.

"â€¦_**him*_â€¦to go to Tokyo. Why do we all have to be here?"

Sugawara glanced at the tall blonde and gave him a smile.

"We have to prove Hinata's parents that we are all good boys." He said vaguely.

They waited for at least a minute outside the house, until the door opened and Hinata Shouyou appeared. She was wearing a long-sleeved white sweater, a pair of shorts, knee-high socks and fluffy blue slippers. She looked just like a younger sister waiting for her onii-chan to come home.

"Come in!" Hinata said cheerfully. Her suitors, I mean, team mates, came into her house.

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The Hinata residence was a simple, Japanese-style house, just like most of the other houses in the prefecture. Inside it was surprisingly spacious and very cozy. The boys came in and removed their shoes, leaving them neatly aligned at the entryway before following Hinata through a short corridor.

"Come into the living room for a while," Hinata said, "we're halfway done preparing dinner."

"Y-you can cook?" Kageyama asked, interested.

Hinata abruptly shook her head as she quickly spoke, "No, I'm only helping with the preparations! My mother does the cooking!"

"Hinata? Is that you and your teammates?" her mother's voice was heard all the way from the kitchen.

"Sorry for inconvenience!" The volleyball team members apologized politely.

The first person to meet the volleyball team was Hinata Shouyou's six-year-old little sister, Hinata Natsu. If Shouyou was a shrimp, Natsu was a munchkin. Natsu sat at the low table in the living room, playing with a stuffed toy. She looked upon the boys with big, brown eyes.

"Have a seat," Hinata said as she waved them over to the sofa, "I'll go help my mother in the kitchen for a while."

She walked into the kitchen afterwards, leaving the rest of the volleyball team with her little sister.

The boys stayed in the living room, feeling slightly awkward, especially when Natsu stopped playing with her toy and took a long glance at them.

The little girl eyed the guys one by one. Her big brown eyes, which frighteningly resembled Hinata's finally stopped to take a long look at Nishinoya.

"Are you Hinata's boyfriend?" she asked the libero all of a sudden.

"Eh?" Nishinoya fell silent for a moment, taken aback by the question.

"This girl's asking if I'm Shouyou's boyfriend?" Noya's face went red.

"N-no, I'm not!" the libero shook his head frantically in denial.

"Oh." Natsu then turned to face Kageyama.

"Are you onee-chan's boyfriend?"

It was the raven-haired setter's turn to blush.

"N-no way in hell!" he said defensively.

"How about you, onii-chan?" Natsu's eyes drifted to Tsukishima.

It took a while before the tall middle blocker gave his blunt answer.

"Not gonna happen." He said in an even tone.

The mini-ginger then stared at Yamaguchi, Sugawara, Sawamura and Asahi, who all shook their heads to say no.

"Honestly, I'd be mistaken for a dirty old man if I hit on someone like your sibling." Asahi said.

Natsu nodded in agreement, which made Karasuno's ace give a melancholy smile (_**She agrees with me? So I do look like a D.O.M.?*_ Asahi thought in horror) in return. She lastly stared at Tanaka.

He looked at her anxiously; he was expecting to be asked as well.

Strangely enough, the little girl left the living room all of a sudden, without even a glance at the monk-haired second year.

"Eh?" Tanaka was totally dumbstruck because he got ignored.

"She did not ask Tanaka-senpai!" Yamaguchi observed.

Tsukishima smiled smugly. "Apparently, she believes that Hinata wouldn't even think of having Tanaka-senpai as a boyfriend."

Boy, Glasses's remark hit home. Straight in Tanaka's heart, like a huge, poisoned arrow. Tsukishima just poured acidic venom on his senpai's gaping heart wound and placed hooks on its edges to keep it from closing.

Tanaka fell silent, frozen in shock and humiliation. Of course, the other members sought to ease him of his sadness.

"Tanaka, don't take it too hard!" Sawamura patted the second-year wing spiker on the back to comfort him.

"The captain's right, Ryu!" Nishinoya consoled his friend.

"Don't let a little girl's judgment about who's the perfect guy for her sister get into you!"

"O-okay!" Tanaka still looked upset.

When Hinata returned to the living room, she was carrying a plate of biscuits and glasses filled with iced tea on a tray. She placed them one by one on the low table.

"Mother cooked a lot tonight," Hinata said, "but for the meantime

have some iced tea and biscuits." She noticed the hysterical face of Tanaka.

"What's wrong, senpai?"

"He's fine! Don't worry about him, Hinata." Sugawara said with a fake smile.

"Are you sure? Tanaka-senpai looks sickâ€|"

"He's all right," Sawamura spoke.

"Is that so?" Hinata frowned at the captain.

"I'm really sorry for troubling all of you, by the way."

Silence covered the entire living room like a heavy blanket. They guys looked at Hinata, who felt bad for having to ask them come to her house just to convince her parents about the trip to Tokyo.

Nishinoya was the first to break the silence, "What are you talking about? I already said you're coming to Tokyo with us no matter what, right?"

The gingerhead stared at the libero with surprised brown eyes.

"Wellâ€|if anythingâ€|we'd have a pretty good dinner, at least."

Hinata was much surprised when Tsukishima spoke. Did Glasses just make an effort to comfort her?

Kageyama was not to be outshined, of course. "But you have to train harder in return," he said, before looking away.

Hinata's face finally brightened up when Sawamura added, "See? We're fine with this. We want to train in Tokyo together with you."

Hinata nodded, "Osu!"

"Shou-chan! Dinner's served." said Hinata's mother.

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Karasuno Volleyball Team, along with the rest of the Hinata family, sat around the long table at the modest-looking dining area. Anyone who would look at the food served on the table of the Hinata family would think that there was a feast going on. It was a balanced meal of grilled mackerel, Nikujaga (meat and potato stew), Sunomono (cucumber salad), miso soup and brown rice.

"Woahâ€|" the boys' mouths almost watered at the sight.

Hinata's mother smiled. "What are you boys waiting for?"

"THANKS FOR THE MEAL!" the volleyball team said in unison, thanking their gracious hosts before chomping down.

"The food's great!" Nishinoya said enthusiastically after tasting the mackerel.

"Really?" Hinata smiled, looking more excited than she usually did. "I'm glad you like it, Noya-san!"

"Onee-chan cooked the fish," said Natsu happily, "and most of the other dishes."

All of the guys stared at Hinata, whose cheeks glowed bright rosy color.

"Iâ€¦I didn't do much, really." She said shyly.

"Oh, stop denying your talent in cooking." Suga said with a grin.

"How about this," Sawamura spoke suggestively, "Hinata, if we lose one of the practice matches, you'll be cooking dinner for everyone."

"T-that's not fair, captain!" Hinata pouted her lips as she complained.

Sawamura chuckled softly as he spoke, "I'm just kidding, Hinata!"

The rest of the team laughed with the captain, and soon even Hinata's mother and sister were laughing with them.

All that time, Hinata's parents watched their son, erm, daughter, as she shared lively conversations with the loud young men of the volleyball team she was in. Yes, Hinata Shouyou's parents still remember that Shouyou's a guy magically transformed into a girl, but point is, all daughters are meant to be protected from the deadliest species of predators in the world - the boys.

**So far, so good,** thought Hinata's father as he eyed the boys one by one.

**The captain looks like a decent man, the adult-looking one has the personality of a saint, and the silver-haired lad seems trustworthy as wellâ€¦but the younger ones areâ€¦**

His eyes drifted to the first and second year boys.

_**Hmmâ€¦the short one and the bald one are quite the rowdy pairâ€¦the megane blonde with his minion, on the other hand, are kind of bullies...Sho-chan must be wary around themâ€¦that black-haired kid, meanwhileâ€¦**_he frowned at Kageyama. The raven-haired setter had not spoken much since they came into the Hinata family's house.

â€¦_**Is he always that tense?*_

"Kageyama?" Hinata glanced at her oddball duo partner. The freshman setter had been eating quietly all that time, not even throwing an angry retort or an insult to anyone, not even to Hinata or Tsukishima.

"Huh?" Kageyama seemed dazed, as if he had just woken up from a dream.

Hinata frowned, worried.

"Is there a problem with the food?" she asked.

Staring at her big brown eyes, Kageyama went still for a moment. He had been silent all that time because frustration has been eating him alive, ever since Hinata became a girl.

Yep, it's not easy to behave like a normal, healthy boy if you can't stop wondering why you don't like seeing your gender-bended friend together with a bully of a teammate.

"I'm fine!" Kageyama shouted in reply. To Hinata's parents, it sounded very rude, but to Hinata Shouyou, it was a sign that the raven-haired setter was still alive and in his right mind.

"Good! I thought you're sick, just like Tanaka-san a while ago." Hinata said with a grin.

"Why would you even think that?"

"Wellâ€¦you had this stupid look on your faceâ€¦" Hinata tried to imitate a silent, serious-looking Kageyama, and Kageyama found it very annoying. The rest of the team, on the other hand, found it very hilarious, and they were all laughing hard. Well, Tsukishima was stifling his laugh, but then again he was the type who prefers keeping his emotions to himself.

"Stop that." Kageyama growled, but the angry look on his face was halfhearted.

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The Karasuno Volleyball Team went back to the living room after dinner, this time together with Hinata's father. Natsu was in Shouyou's room, as she had to go to sleep early because she had school the next morning.

Hinata's father, a not-so-tall man in his forties, sat on a cozy chair before the boys and looked at them the way an emperor would stare at a group of criminals under trial. For a man his built, his presence was strong, as if he was a seven-foot-tall berserker. His sharp eyes stared at them as if he could see their souls clearly.

Hinata, feeling the tension that her father was giving to her teammates, spoke up. "P-papaâ€¦they're here to seek permission
â€œ"

"About the Tokyo trip?" her father arched his eyebrows inquiringly. The sharp edge in his deep voice made Hinata blanch in fright.

"Y-yes!"

"Hinata-san," Sawamura was the first to speak up, being the captain and all, "we are hoping that you allow Hinata Shouyou to come with us to Tokyo."

*He went straight to the point,* Hinata's father thought, amused at the captain's audacity.

"I'm not sure about that," The older man was not to give up, nevertheless, "I don't think Shou-chan should join you."

Everyone in the team, including Hinata, was horrified at this statement.

"B-but Papa!" Hinata said, aghast.

"Shou-chan, if Natsu-chan is the one in this situation, I doubt you'll allow her to go on a trip with a bunch of boys." Her father said, crossing his arms in a firm manner.

"But I'm a guy, and my teammates know it!"

"Not with that body, you're not one of the boys." Hinata's father sounded grim and worried this time.

"Sure, your teammates know who you really are. But what about those guys from the other schools that you will face? I don't think you'll be safe in Tokyo, Shou-chan."

Hinata's lips quivered as she fought the tears forming in the corners of her eyes. She stared at her father stubbornly as she clenched her fists to keep herself from crying.

"I want to go to Tokyo and play volleyball!" she blurted out.

Nevertheless, her father was just as stubborn as her. He gave her a defiant look, and his eyes stared at her, telling her that his decision was final.

"This is for your own safety, Shou-chan!"

"Ah," Sugawara smiled, "I see what Hinata-san is worried about now."

Father and daughter glanced at the silver-haired setter, puzzled.

"But do not worry, Hinata-san," Suga said confidently, "We've been keeping the boys of the team, as well as those of the other clubs, from getting any close to your daughter. Rest assured, sir, Hinata will be well-guarded when we go to Tokyo."

Hinata's face creased as she had no idea how to react to what her

senpai had said.

"Well-guardedâ€|"

"I feel better now that you have said that!" Hinata's father exclaimed. His aura suddenly became lighter, and warm as the sunlight. It was exactly the same as that of his daughter Shouyou.

"That's what every father worries about, you know? Seeing his daughter leave, worrying that when she comes back, she's already with a boy who would ask for her hand in marriageâ€|" a thought suddenly came into his mind.

"I hope none of you will do that to me."

It took a moment for the boys to understand what Hinata's father said, and when they did, all of their faces went scarlet. Even the seniors blushed at the idea that they will ask for Hinata's hand someday.

"N-no sir!" they said in unison.

"Papa, stop kidding around," Hinata said with a hopeful smile, "So you're allowing me to go to Tokyo, right? Right?"

Hinata-san heaved a sigh, "Yes, I'm allowing you to go. Butâ€|" he raised a finger as he said one condition.

"Promise me you won't go out on a date with any guy when you get to Tokyo, Shou-chan."

"Papa!" Hinata shouted. Her entire face was red in embarrassment.

"Like hell I'm going to â€" "

"Promise me, or I won't allow you." Hinata-san had a stubborn pout on his face.

His daughter finally sighed in defeat.

"Fine," she said, "it's not like someone's gonna ask me out, anyway."

Boy, if only she knew.

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Haha, sorry for the late update.

00JellaNizzZ-chan, I tried hard to do as you say, but I don't think I totally pulled it off. But I tried hard to correct my quotation marks. Oh, and I edited the previous chapter and worked on the flaws you've seen and mentioned in you review, but I think I missed a lot of those erroneous parts. Again, thank you for your critique.

****To everyone: Review?****

5. Chapter 5

****Edited: (8/28/2014)****

****Hello fellow authors who love Haikyuu and harem! Chapter five is here!****

****From this point on, the story will more or less stray from Haikyuu's original plotline. So I've made changes in the timeline, because this story was written, assuming that the universe has gone awry and Hinata did become a girl.****

****If you've read the manga, you'll easily know the difference anyway.****

****So yeah, this is the chapter you've been waiting for (or so I thought), the chapter where Karasuno joins the training camp in Tokyo! Now KenHina, KuroHina (KuroHina is legit, right? If not I'll make it legit!), and maybe other Hina ships are about to set sail!****

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 5: From Tohoku with Love****

The day of the ordeal has arrived.

The pressure that Hinata Shouyou felt was greater that morning than when she first played in an official match. That was due to the fact that her body does most of the work in a volleyball match.

But the mock exams? Hell no.

While her jumping ability and superb reflexes are high, Hinata was, unfortunately, not blessed with brains that can work on something else other than volleyball.

And when the mock exams became a threat to her chance of playing the practice matches in Tokyo (not that she had high hopes for playing, not in her current gender anyway), she really exerted more than a hundred percent of effort just to get a decent grade. She asked help from Yachi, who lent her neat looking notes to review on. She also begged (yes, Hinata admits it) for Tsukishima to tutor her, and Glasses-kun (much to the surprise of the rest of the team) taught her.

So, Karasuno High Men's Volleyball Team was quite assured that she, along with Kageyama, Nishinoya and Tanaka are going to pass the mock exams.

That morning of the exams, though, Hinata felt otherwise.

She went to school riding her bike just like what she routinely does every day, only that today she almost fell off her bike thrice for overthinking about the upcoming tests.

It was a good thing that Nishinoya accidentally met his kouhai along the way. He had seen Hinata riding her bike thoughtlessly, almost tumbling in the middle of the road because she did not notice a pothole gaping ahead, like a mouth of a predator waiting an unsuspecting prey.

Nishinoya immediately noticed the sullen look in his ginger-haired underclassman. Understanding that what she was feeling was only apprehension for the mock test, the libero decided to try helping her cheer up.

"Shouyou!" Nishinoya ran to Hinata, who gripped the brakes of her bike and came into a halt upon hearing the sound of his voice.

"Noya-san!" the gingerhead was surprised to see her senpai early in the morning.

Nishinoya gave his very bright and inspiring grin to her as he greeted, "Good morning!"

"G-good morning." Hinata raised an eyebrow in wonder.

"Noya-san, did something happen? You're so energetic today. You're not excited about the mock test, are you?"

"What? No!" Nishinoya laughed. "I'm way more excited to go to Tokyo. How about you?"

"Of course I'm excited too!" Hinata blurted out, but a thought suddenly occurred to her which made her frown.

Noya easily noticed the change in her expression. And why not? He had been taking in every single detail of her face ever since the day she became a girl.

"What's wrong, Shouyou?" he asked, although he already knew the answer.

Hinata got off her bike, ushering it as she began to walk with the Guardian Deity to school. Her steps were slow, and her eyes were downcast as she pondered for the right words to say.

"If I pass the mock exam, I will go to Tokyo," she spoke softly, "and we will play against Nekoma again. But I'm a girl now. I doubt that I can enter the court with you guysâ€|"

Just the thought of coming to Tokyo only to end up watching the Battle at the Trash Heap at the bench area â€" all because she became a girl â€" stung Hinata. Nishinoya, however, felt worse: he felt that the sadness she was experiencing was his entire fault.

Unconsciously, he held one of her hands, which was still holding the

handle of her bike. Her skin felt soft and warm in his gentle but firm clasp.

"Eh?" Hinata glanced at her senpai in wonder.

"Noya-san, why are you holding my hand?"

"What â€" oh!" Nishinoya jumped back, surprised at his own action. His face quickly changed color, turning into deep red.

"S-sorry!" he blurted out, definitely embarrassed. "I-I did not mean to do anything wrong, Hinata!"

"What?" Hinata giggled. The tinkling sound of her laughter, along with her sunny smile, made the Guardian Deity blush even harder, although his face could not get any redder already.

"W-why are you laughing, Hinata?" Nishinoya was flustered at her reaction.

"Nothing," Hinata answered, "I just find it strange that the cool Noya-san would suddenly become a softie."

"Softie?" Nishinoya pouted, slightly offended for some reason.

"What do you mean, I've become a softie?"

"Maybe we should buy ice cream after the exams!"

"That's a great ideaâ€"hey, why are you changing the topic?"

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The mock exams had been the trial of the year for many a club member. Those who are members of sports clubs were the ones who suffered the most: a day of supplementary lessons meant losing a day to practice. And in every sport, one day of practice missed can make or break your athletic career.

The volleyball team was no exception, and so they did every single preparation just to make sure the mock exams won't get in their way to training in Tokyo. After a harsh tutorial, they were hoping that their fourâ€"how shall I put itâ€"most gullibleâ€"members â€" Hinata, Kageyama, Nishinoya, and Tanaka â€" shall pass the test.

Tsk. Too bad.

"What? Hinata failed Englishâ€"? What about all the confidence she hadâ€"?!"

"Apparently, he didn't notice that his answers were one space off until the test was practically over."

"You're kidding! There's no way the English teacher Ono-sensei would overlook something like that!"

"It was a huge shock to Yachi-san, too."

When the members of the volleyball team had gathered in the club room, they have found out the horrendous result of the mock exam. Much to their Å¼ber-shock, Hinata had failed English, of all subjects. She only got 21 points, although technically she could have gotten something higher, if not perfect score. Just because of a single space missed.

"For Kageyama, it's Contemporary Lit, huhâ€|" Sawamura spoke sympathetically as he stared at Kageyama's test paper.

"There seemed to be a lot of random reading comprehension questions this time," Ennoshita Chikara said, "and he focused on the same memorization method as Nishinoya, soâ€|"

"Woah, he got full points on Kanji! Amazingâ€|" Asahi somehow gushed. Nevertheless, the raven-haired setter only got 38 points.

Hence, their efforts wereâ€|slightly futile.

"Don't feel too bad about it." Sugawara spoke consolingly to his kouhais.

"There'll be other trips, you knowâ€|"

"â€|_**We'll get to Tokyo one way or another**_."

Suga jolted upon hearing the menacing tone of the two overdetermined underclassmen.

"You gonna run?" Kageyama spoke in a harsh tone.

"Bike, of course." Hinata growled under her breath.

**They're still planning to go?** Sugawara thought. He was not sure whether he should be amazed at their eagerness or be scared instead.

Tanaka, on the other hand, had an idea in his mind. It was not what you'd call a good one, but it was definitely effective. Being the 'kind' senpai that he always was, he decided to give it a try. He stood before the oddball duo and finally spoke up.

"Oi. Listen up." He said with arms crossed.

The oddball duo looked upon the bald headed wing spiker.

"You guys each failed only one subject, right?" Tanaka said. "In that case, supplementary class should only last through the morning. And thenâ€|"

There was a strange smile that played on Tanaka's lips. It was a combination of a sadistic and nervous smile. What that kind of smile meant, no one has any idea, but apparently the second-year spiker had some sort of plan.

"I'll call in your savior."

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"Ooooh!"

"That'sâ€¦could that beâ€¦Tokyo Skytree?!" Tanaka blurted out in amazement

The most awaited day by the members of Karasuno Volleyball Club has finally arrived. It was the day when they were going to have a joint practice match against Nekoma High and the rest of the Fukurodani Academy Group, better known as the City Boy Alliance.

"No, that's just a normal steel tower," said the vice captain of Nekoma High, Kai Nobuyuki.

Hearing this, the captain of Nekoma High volleyball team, Tetsurou Kuroo, could not suppress a loud laugh.

"Buahahahahaha!" the bed-haired senior guffawed so hard that his stomach hurt.

It was Nekoma High that welcomed Karasuno when the team arrived in Tokyo. It was early in the morning, and while the second-years were already overexcited, Tsukishima and Yamaguchi were still sleepy after the long travel by bus.

"Hey, by the way," Kuroo spoke to Sawamura, who seemed uneasy around him.

"Aren't you missing some people?"

"Well, the thing isâ€¦" Sawamura explained the situation of the oddball duo, the fact that Kageyama and Hinata could not come with them that morning.

"Huh." Kuroo spoke as he walked with Sawamura. "So that superhuman combo is taking supplementary lessons right about now?"

"Yeah," Sawamura answered nervously. He still had not told the other captain about Hinata's condition.

"But, wellâ€¦"

Their conversation was suddenly interrupted by an annoyingly loud cry of disbelief that could only come from Nekoma's Mohawk-haired wing spiker, Yamamoto Taketora.

"HOOOOH!" Yamamoto was on his knees, awe-inspired by what he was seeing.

"T-th-the girls have multiplied! Now there's a pretty one and a cute one!"

Shimizu, being the senior, kept Yachi behind her, like a mother protecting her young from a nearby predator.

Tanaka smirked at Yamamoto. "Take a good look, Tora!"

The bald haired second year stood in front of Karasuno's two managers, arms raised and his face carrying a placid look, which was almost monk-like.

"This is the sanctity of Karasuno."

"Kuh! So bright!" Yamamoto had to close his eyes in awe.

"Let's go." Shimizu was already pulling Yachi away from the two idiots.

"Well, head over to the gymnasium as soon as you're all set." Kuroo smirked at the members of Karasuno.

"The rest are already gathering there."

"Got it." Sawamura answered in a serious tone.

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At that time, somewhere in Miyagi prefecture, Hinata and Kageyama were determined to get over with their supplementary lessons.

"Oho, what's this!" the female teacher was amazed at their willingness to study.

"You two are unusually earnest!"

The eagerness to finish the lessons came from Hinata and Kageyama's strong belief that they will still make it to Tokyo on time.

All because Tanaka-senpai has given them a ray of hope. Some sort of 'savior'.

Thus, the moment they were done with their lessons, the oddball duo sped out of the classroom and rushed downstairs to Karasuno High's front entrance, where a Honda mini truck awaited them.

"Hey there."

Standing before them was a blond-haired punk chick wearing a dark tank top, tight-fitting jeans, and a pair of heeled leather boots.

"Hop in." she said, pointing a thumb at the truck.

Hinata could not believe her eyes. "A-are you Tanaka-san's sister?"

"Just call me Saeko-neesan." The punk chick said with a flirty wink.

"I'll deliver ya to Tokyo faster than you can blink."

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Sawamura looked more distraught as the team entered the huge gym. Part of his distress was due to the three other teams (aside from Nekoma) that they were about to train with: Shinzen Private Highschool, Ubugawa, and the team that had been Tokyo's champion, Fukurodani Academy.

But the bigger problem for Karasuno's captain was how to tell Nekoma that Hinata Shouyou would not be around today.

"Huh?" Kozume Kenma was baffled when he did not see Hinata around.

"Where's Shouyou?"

"They said he's got supplementary lessons." Yamamoto answered.

"Oh." Kenma looked somehow disappointed, not that it was obvious on his face.

Sawamura stood outside the court with Kuroo as the bed-haired captain explained everything to him.

"Once everyone's warmed up, we'll focus on rotating around so every team plays each other." Kuroo said.

"Got it." Sawamura replied, although he was only half-listening.

"Each set, the team who lost does one lap of flying falls around the court as penalty."

"Yeah?"

Kuroo glanced at Sawamura, raising an eyebrow in wonder.

"Are you sure you're gonna play? You look like you're mind's fleeing somewhere faraway." He said.

"Sorry," Sawamura apologized, "I remembered something all of a sudden."

"Oh? What is it?"

"Hinata?" Sawamura scratched his head.

"He's not coming."

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The mini truck seemed as if it was a space ship taking nasty warp drive as Saeko Tanaka drove the oddball duo to Tokyo. Not that Hinata and Kageyama minded the overspeeding and reckless driving. In fact, Kageyama was sleeping peacefully at the back while Hinata was contemplating while she sat beside Saeko-neesan.

"You must be Shouyou." Saeko spoke all of a sudden, breaking the silence. Hinata glanced at her, and the punk blonde suddenly pinched the gingerhead's cheek.

"They are right. You're such a cute girl." Saeko said with a grin.

"No wonder Ryu's frustrated."

Hinata arched her eyebrows in wonder. "Tanaka-senpai?"

Saeko chuckled in amusement. "Tell me. Have any of the guys in your team made a pass on you?"

"Made a pass?" Hinata had no experience in teenage love life just yet, so she had no idea what the other girl was talking about.

"Oh, you knowâ€¦has there been a guy who asked you out?"

Hinata smiled awkwardly. _**Not this issue again,**_ she thought.

"No one has ever asked you out?" Saeko gave her an incredulous look. "Seriously? Are the guys in Karasuno volleyball team blind?"

Hinata laughed to hide her discomfort. "No, they just know that I am a guy."

"So you're one of the boys?" Saeko raised an eyebrow at her. "Shouldn't that make you more appealing?"

Hinata clearly had no idea what Tanaka-senpai's elder sister was trying to say. All she knew was that Saeko totally misunderstood what she had said.

**Oh, well. She won't believe me anyway.**

"What do you mean?" Hinata simply asked, trying to go with the flow of the discussion.

"Some guys prefer boyish type nowadays." Saeko said vaguely.

"Alrighty. Almost there. I'm gonna floor it!"

And Hinata was slammed against the back of her seat, as the mini truck lurched forward like a rocket.

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The day was about to end, and Karasuno kept on losing. They did the flying falls for the nth time, and they were all getting exhausted.

They just lost to Fukurodani Academy, and they were doing another lap of flying falls again.

"One lap of flying falls!"

"How many losses does that make for them?"

"It's not that they're all that weak, but they're averageâ€|"

"Which one's the incredible first year that gave Nekoma a tough fight?"

Nishinoya could just hear the murmurs of the other players, from the other schools while he does flying falls with the other guys. He found them annoying, those lesser dudes who feel like their school's better.

**Indeed, we are still weak, but that's just for nowâ€|**

One of the annoying guys spoke.

"Maybe the Nekoma guys just overestimate t â€" "

There was a loud creaking sound as the doors of the gymnasium slowly opened. All the guys looked to the doorway, and saw a blond-haired rocker chick, who was grinning widely.

"Ooh, they're still at it." Saeko said with a smirk.

"Looks like we made it on time. Nicely done."

The sudden distraction gave Karasuno a temporary break from doing flying falls.

"Neesan!" Nishinoya shouted happily.

"Huh?" Asahi wondered. "Nishinoya's sister?"

"Nope. Ryu's!"

"They definitely look alikeâ€|" Suga observed.

Tanaka smiled, happy that his idea went well. "Good to see you're in one piece."

Saeko grinned at the oddball duo, who were standing behind her. All eyes widened â€" either in surprise or in wonder â€" at the arrival of a raven-haired young man, and a petite ginger-haired girl.

Hinata stepped into the gymnasium, together with Kageyama.

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There were mixed reactions about the arrival of Hinata and Kageyama. The Karasuno boys were certainly glad that the oddball duo had made it. The guys from the other schools, on the other hand, were curiousâ€|mostly at Hinata, being the cute one and all.

The members of Nekoma High were specifically in awe.

"They have another cute girl?!" Yamamoto was absolutely petrified.

Kenma on the other hand, narrowed his eyes at the ginger-haired girl. Of course, unlike Karasuno, these guys have no idea that the girl was in fact Hinata Shouyou himself. But Kenma was known to be a good observer. The moment the new girl stepped into the gym, he felt something strange was going on.

"Oh, what's this?"

Kenma drifted his eyes to his friend Kuroo, who had been eyeing the girl as well. Reading the smirk on his lips and the gleam in his eyes, the setter immediately realized something shocking.

Kurooâ€|is interested?

"I've been told that the shrimp one in the superhuman combo couldn't come, so I was a bit disappointed." Kuroo whispered to no one in particular.

"Butâ€|"

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When Hinata had found out what happened to Karasuno, she was somewhat horrified. She thought that if they had come to Tokyo earlier, if she and Kageyama had not flunked the mock tests, they could have done something.

**Oh, well, time for action.**

Without hesitation, Hinata rushed to coach Nekomata and bowed to the waist.

"Please let me play with the members of Karasuno!" she shouted pleadingly.

Her request had everyone, even the members of Karasuno volleyball team, gape their mouths wide because of shock.

"Oh, wow." Kuroo grinned from ear to ear, like a cheshire cat.

"You want to what?" Coach Nekomata was utterly surprised.

"Please!" Hinata pleaded once more.

Coach Nekomata stared at Coach Ukai and Takeda-sensei, who were also stunned by the gingerhead's sudden action.

"Who on earth is this girl?" Coach Nekomata asked.

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Hehe. I hope this chapter satisfies you for the meantime.

Please leave a review!

6. Chapter 6

Edited: (9/1/2014)

Hey!

Chapter six is here!

Let the ships sail into the fanfiction sea!

AwesomeCocoPuff: I'll give a hint on what kind of torture the third years are giving to anyone who dares to hit on Hinata. Sorry, it is anything but tickle torture (because tickle torture is too light a punishment *evil smile*).

00JellaNilzzZ: I hope my posts on facebook do not flood your newsfeed.

EminaRukiax: His name is Oikawa Tooru, the Grand King from Aoba Josai. Does anybody have a suggestion on how I should put him in my story, because I've been planning to put him in my fic for so long, I just cannot find the right place in my plot.

**Everyone: PLEASE, LEAVE A REVIEW!
(T^T)**

Douzo!

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Chapter 6: Senpai Noticed Me (Uh-oh)

"Who on earth is this girl?"

Coach Nekomata glared at Coach Ukai the Younger and Takeda-sensei, who both blanched in horror after seeing Hinata plead to be allowed to play in the practice match. At that time, Karasuno was playing its last game for the day with Shinzen Private Highschool. When she and Kageyama arrived from Miyagi, they were shocked to see the scores,

and it ignited Hinata's utter desire to play.

"No offense, little girl, but this is men's volleyball." Coach Nekomata spoke to Hinata in a surprisingly mild tone, as if he was talking to a kid.

"But I NEED to play this practice match!" Hinata said stubbornly.

"Yes, but you see â€" "

"Please, Coach Nekomata!"

The old man gave the ginger-haired girl an incredulous look. He had never encountered such a persistent young person before.

"What's your name, child?" he asked, much to everyone's surprise.

Hinata looked at him in the eye as she was about to give her name.

"My name is Hinata Shou â€" "

"Shouko!" Takeda-sensei shouted all of a sudden. Both the gingerhead and the old man glanced at him.

"H-her name's Hinata Shouko." Takeda went on with his ruse.

"S-she's Hinata Shouyou's cousinâ€|"

"Huh?" Hinata raised an eyebrow. Coach Ukai gave her a look that said _**'Shut up and play along'**_.

"Hinata Shouyou?" Coach Nekomata apparently remembered the name. The old man glanced around, realizing that the said Karasuno player was not around.

"Speaking of that shrimp, where is he now?"

"Errâ€|" Takeda ran out of lies. Fortunately Ukai was there to cover things up.

"Hinata's been left in Miyagi, to train with the old geezer." Ukai spoke, his tone very believable. He had been planning to ask the Elder Ukai to train the oddball duo anyway.

"Old geezer? You mean your grandfather Ukai?" Coach Nekomata chuckled. "So he's feeling better now?"

The old man laughed heartily upon hearing the news that the older Ukai was back and has returned to his job - training volleyball players as harshly as punishing slaves. His mirthful eyes went back to Hinata, whose brown eyes were wide with wonder and hope.

"Your midget of a cousin can surely jump high. Don't tell me you can pull off his moves as well." He said.

Hinata scowled, offended because the old coach just called him midget. But she gave him a serious and determined look as she gave

answered in a frank tone.

"I can do all of those moves," she said.

"And soon I will do better."

The sheer determination in her brown eyes sent shivers down Coach Nekomata's spine, as if he had been spooked by her boldness and hunger to play volleyball. In the end, the old man laughed out loud, and clapped her on the back.

"All right, little girl. You got me. Now go out and play," He said.

Everyone in the gymnasium was definitely shocked by this, but Hinata simply smiled as she bowed gratefully to the old man.

"Thank you very much!"

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"My," Kuroo smirked. He had never expected such an event to happen.

The petite ginger girl who came in with Kageyama Tobio was like a stun grenade that had just been dropped, bombing everyone in shock. Not only had she made such an entrance, she had boldly asked their coach to allow her to play alongside Karasuno in their match against Shinzen.

She got Kuroo's attention in the blink of an eye.

"Kuroo," Kenma pulled him out of his reverie. "We're having a match here."

"It's okay, there's still another set." Kuroo answered airily. His mischievous eyes never left the petite ginger-haired girl as she put on a yellow jersey over her shirt and joined the other members of Karasuno in their side of the court.

"If we lose both sets, you'll do two laps of flying falls." Kenma's voice was uncharacteristically hostile.

"I don't mind," Kuroo ignored the threat, his eyes still lingering on the other volleyball court, where the girl gathered with the boys of Karasuno.

"Kuroo!" Kenma yelled, much to everyone's surprise.

The bed-haired captain sighed, as if the practice match against Ubugawa had made him exhausted all of a sudden.

"Fine," He whined, feigning a bored expression on his face.

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"I can't believe you got to persuade Coach Nekomata, of all people!" Takeda-sensei gushed at Hinata, still amazed at what happened.

"I have to admit, I'm surprised as well." Hinata answered with a smile.

"I guess I'm luckyâ€|"

Once geared up, she entered the court along with Kageyama, who kept on staring at her incredulously. He looked at her as if she had the power to turn water into wine.

"Hinata!" Suga gave the gingerhead a high five, grinning as he went back to the bench.

"That was FRIGGIN' AWESOME, Hinata!" Nishinoya rubbed her head, messing her hair as he praised how she had bravely spoken to Nekoma's coach. The other guys were still in shock, but deep inside, they were simply glad that Hinata would be able to play with them as a team.

"All right," Sawamura clapped his hands to gather the team.

"Let's show them what Karasuno can do."

"Osu!" the rest of them shouted in reply.

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The match between Karasuno and Shinzen had been eventful, all thanks to the superhuman oddball duo of Kageyama and Hinata. Their freakish quicks had been the crows' trump card to victory. Coach Nekomata himself was impressed. He never thought that the girl would literally mean what she said a while ago.

All throughout the game, however, Hinata noticed how quickly Shinzen had followed up to their attacks. She knew that their victory was all due to the fact that Shinzen has been taken aback by their sudden entrance, and that in their next games, Karasuno won't have such advantage anymore.

"This is the first time we won't have to do flying falls," Sawamura said. He and the rest of the team were absolutely exhausted after an entire day of playing and losing.

"I'm starved." Nishinoya panted.

"Huh, Nekoma and Ubugawa are still at it?"

"At this time, this is probably the last game for today." Tanaka said.

Hinata watched Nekoma battle it out against Ubugawa. Having played them before in Miyagi, Hinata knew almost every player on Nekoma's side, save one player who had taken Inuoka Sou's place. A lean, athletic young man, with silvery-white hair and intense green eyes.

__**It is hard to notice, but he's very tallâ€|**_

And when Kozume Kenma set the ball to the unknown player's side, he jumped and did a strange-looking spike.

__**A whip-like motionâ€|**_Hinata observed as she noticed the tall stranger's arm when spiking.

After the game between Nekoma and Ubugawa, the first day of practice matches between Karasuno and the City Boy Alliance came to an end.

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Hinata's problems, however, were just about to begin.

Kenma was utterly surprised to find out that Hinata Shouyou did not come to Tokyo. For all he knew, Shouyou was the one most excited to have another match against Nekoma. Kenma knew this, because they have been texting each other after the first practice match they ever had.

It was like a developing long-distance friendship going on between the two of them.

Moreover, the fact that Shouyou's 'cousin' came out of nowhere and boldly played with Karasuno somewhat bothered him. Sure, she looked just like Shouyou, and they were both lacking in the height department, but how come her movements and expressions were exactly the same as her cousin's?

__**It's as if Shouyou is residing inside that girl's bodyâ€|**_

"But that's impossible, of course." Kenma murmured while he and his team mates were changing in their locker room.

"You said something?" asked Inuoka, who was changing into a clean shirt.

Kenma shook his head. "Nothing important."

Inuoka glanced at Yamamoto, who was sulking in one corner of the room. The recent events at the gym had rendered him speechless and sullen. "What's his problem?"

Yaku Morisuke folded his arms across his chest in exasperation. "He's been like that ever since he found out that Karasuno has three female managers."

Inuoka smiled awkwardly at this. "Oh."

Everyone already knew that Yamamoto was too fond of girls, and the fact that Nekoma has no female manager left him bereft and disappointed inside.

"The third girl was the most interesting, you know?" said the newest addition to their team, the half-Russian Haiba Lev.

"The tiny one surely kicked Shinzen's butt. She is amazing!"

Kenma scowled. "How come you sound very excited?"

"Wellâ€|she's cute but at the same time, she's very cool." Lev scratched his head shyly.

"I've been thinkingâ€|I wouldn't mind having a girlfriend like her."

**Seriouslyâ€|this guy's honesty is getting annoying.**

"I think she can crush you, if you don't practice your basic moves." Kenma spoke in an uncharacteristically cold tone before fumbling in his bag to get his smartphone.

"That's so cruel, coming from you." Inuoka said.

"Oi!" Yamamoto suddenly came to life as he suddenly yelled at Lev.

"You're not planning to hit on the managers, are you? I won't allow it!"

Yaku and Inuoka were already holding the rampaging Mohawk-haired wing spiker, when someone suddenly spoke behind them.

"Indeed, I wouldn't allow it."

All eyes turned to Kuroo, who was leaning coolly against the doorway of the room. His face had the same kind of smirk, the usual carefree and mischievous expression he had always shown to everyone, but Kenma noticed a hint of steely cold glare in his eyes.

**Jealousy?** Kenma wondered. He had no idea what exactly jealousy was, but knowing Kuroo for a very long time, the observant setter could only think that his friend's behaving oddly.

**Like he wants to remove anyone who tries to get near something he owns, or he wants to own.**

"You're not going to make a pass on any of the managers," Kuroo said in a frighteningly cool voice.

"Especially not the ginger-haired one."

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Kenma walked outside to find a quiet place to stay. Holding his smartphone in his hand, he had decided to call Shouyou. He still could not believe that the strong decoy of Karasuno would prefer not coming to Tokyo just because he had to train with Ukai the Elder.

This calls for a straightforward talk.

Finding Hinata in his list of contacts, he selected it and pressed the phone against his ear as he heard a ringing sound, followed by a sound of someone answering.

"Hello?" a female voice spoke, much to Kenma's surprise.

"Who is this?" he asked in bewilderment.

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**Oh, damn it!**

Hinata bit her lip at her own stupidity. She had just finished changing (she was forced into a separate locker room by Yachi and Shimizu when she was about to enter the boys' room) when she heard her cellphone ring. Instinctively, she answered it, not even bothering to read the name of the caller.

"Hello?" she said.

"Who is this?" she heard Kenma spoke, and she realized the mistake she'd done.

Hinata could not suppress slapping her forehead with her palm for being so stupid. Of course, Kenma would wonder why she wasn't around. She just did not expect him to call. Worse, she did not remember that it was her 'cousin' who owned the phone, not her.

To make matters worse, she heard Kageyama come in.

"Hinata, how long are you gonna stay there?" he spoke exasperatedly.

"Ssh." Hinata pressed a finger against her lips to tell him to shut up.

"Is thatâ€¦Kageyama?" Kenma kept asking on the other line.

In the end, Hinata quickly dropped the line and threw the phone back into her bag. Kageyama gave her a puzzled look, now knowing why she looked nonplussed.

"Kenma called," Hinata said, her face pale in horror, "and I
**answered** it."

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"Idiot." Kageyama grunted. That was all he could say. Then again, he had his own fault in the matter as well: if he hadn't been so loud, Kenma wouldn't confirm that the female Hinata has "Shouyou's" phone.

"Did he ask anything?"

"He asked me who I am, of course." Hinata answered. "I did not say anything."

"Good." Kageyama sighed. "Let's just say your cousin Shouyou lent you his phone or something."

Hinata nodded in agreement. The alibi made sense, and was very believable. Relieved that Kenma's phone call was not much of a big deal, she could not suppress heaving a sigh.

"All right, let's go. They might have eaten your share of the dinner already." Kageyama left the room and walked to the dining area.

"EHHHH?" Hinata's face immediately shifted from worried to downright horrified.

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The dining area was a wide, sparsely decorated place with huge rectangular tables, each one enough to seat all the boys from the same team. There was a separate table for the ladies, and not surprisingly, Hinata had to sit with them.

Kenma came into the dining area where the rest of the people have gathered. He looked slightly mystified.

"Something wrong?" Kuroo asked as he moved aside to give his friend a space around Nekoma's table.

"I tried to call Shouyou on the phone," Kenma said. His wide, golden eyes drifted to where the girls were seated. Hinata Shouko was among them, looking strangely uneasy.

"_**She**_" answered the call."

"Huh?" Kuroo followed his gaze, and smiled when he saw the petite, ginger-haired girl.

"You mean she has her cousin's phone?"

Kenma nodded. "I wonder whyâ€|"

Kuroo, on the other hand, found the situation less perplexing. If anything, he thought it was something that he could use to his own

advantage.

"Mind if I have Shouyou's number?" he asked all of a sudden. He tried to sound idle, even innocent, but his face revealed his ulterior motive right away.

Kenma glowered at the captain of Nekoma. "No."

Kuroo pouted in annoyance. "And to think that we're close friendsâ€¦"

"We're not close enough as to be sharing other people's phone numbers simply because we find their cousins cute."

"Tch," Kuroo grunted. "So coldhearted."

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If Hinata was in her male form, she would have had the happiest moment in his teenage life: surrounded by a lot of pretty girls, in a huge table laden with delicious food, no annoying dude to insult him.

Unfortunately, she was a girl â€" exactly just like them, if not prettier.

Talk about rotten luck.

"Nee, Hina-chan." Spoke one manager from another school. "You did a great job showing those boys who's the boss."

"Yeah," agreed another girl. "You just proved to them that girls can beat the guys in sports!"

Hinata smiled, happy to be appreciated. Nevertheless, she could not help but feel very nervous as well. She wondered how these girls would react once they found out that she was actually a guy inside a wrong body. Another reason for her discomfort was that she kept on worrying about Kenma, especially after he called her number. Knowing him, he'll probably ask her a lot of questions about Hinata Shouyou, her so-called 'cousin'.

Both Yachi and Shimizu had notice her uneasiness.

"Hinata?" Shimizu patted the gingerhead's shoulder, making her jolt in surprise.

"Y-yeah?" Hinata sounded slightly absent-minded at that time.

"Are you all right?" Shimizu frowned. Yachi on the other hand, looked at Hinata with concern.

Hinata smiled in order to hide her discomfort. "I'm fineâ€¦I guess I'm just not that hungry."

"Eat some more. We don't want to hear your stomach growl in the

middle of the night."

Hinata pouted. "That sounds so mean, Shimizu-san."

Shimizu smiled, and Yachi stifled a laugh, which made Hinata raise an eyebrow in puzzlement.

"What's so funny?" Hinata asked.

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"Looks like they've found a best friend in Hinata."

Tsukishima had accidentally taken a momentary glance at the gingerhead, who sat at the table with the other girls. Thanks to Shimizu and Yachi, Hinata gradually felt comfortable with the ladies. She looked just like any other girl, happily chatting, occasionally giggling. Strangely enough, her personality was just the same as before, and her female form actually suited her behavior. It made him think that Hinata might be a girl in reality, and that Hinata's male body was actually the false form created by some sort of magic.

When he returned his attention to the people around his table, Tsukishima immediately noticed Yamaguchi smiling at him.

"What?" Tsukishima narrowed his eyes at his friend suspiciously.

"N-nothing." Yamaguchi answered, but his face told otherwise.

"Yamaguchi." The tall blonde disliked the other guy's secrecy.

"Uh...well...I just noticed." Yamaguchi smiled nervously, hoping that his remark wouldn't cost him his own life.

"You've been nice to Hinata lately, Tsukki."

"Hm?" Tsukishima arched his eyebrows, not exactly understanding what Yamaguchi meant.

"He's been less cruel to Hinata, you mean." Kageyama suddenly broke in, speaking through a mouthful of rice.

Tsukishima gave the raven-haired setter a scornful look. "Why should you care?"

"I dunno." Kageyama shrugged. "I guess we're not used to it." He swallowed his food before continuing.

"You're not becoming soft towards Hinata, are you?"

**His words had a bit of edge on it,** Tsukishima thought, and he had realized that he was being mocked by Kageyama. But the question made him think twice for a moment. When Hinata had changed into a

girl, he kept on saying spiteful remarks on her, just like in the past. But Tsukishima knew that most of his remarks have been more of a playful comment and less of an insult. Moreover, the shrimp had easily gotten her way with the mock tests (although the results were futile) because he complied in teaching her.

**I don't see myself becoming soft towards herâ€|him, rather. Hinata Shouyou is still a guy. I could never forget that fact.**

"Let's just say I'm only being careful. The last I've heard, the third years have upgraded their torture system." Tsukishima said coldly.

Seeing Kageyama shudder at the thought of the seniors setting torture on a higher level, which reminded him of the suffering he had just a week ago, made Tsukishima smile in satisfaction.

"So you're saying that you just don't want to be punished?" Yamaguchi inquired, as if he was looking for another answer from the tall middle blocker.

"Why else would I be 'nice' to Hinata?" Tsukishima replied. His eyes then drifted to the other tables, looking at the other teams just to place his attention elsewhere.

However, he did not like what he saw at the table of Nekoma High.

His fingers twitched almost of its own accord when he saw Kuroo eyeing someone at the girls' table. He needed not to follow the third year middle blocker's eyesight to know who he had been staring at.

It could only be Hinata, Tsukishima thought, and he observed how intense the tall bed-haired middle blocker was when looking at the little gingerhead. At first he found it strange, but Tsukishima then noticed, after deeply focusing on those sly cat eyes, a combination of curiosity and desire.

It was then that he understood that Kuroo was totally smitten with Hinata.

**What the hell?** was the first thing that came into Tsukishima's mind, something which he certainly did not voice out. But the look on his face totally gave him away, and so Yamaguchi could not help but ask him.

"What's wrong, Tsukki?"

Tsukishima looked back at his friend. "Nothing."

Truth be told, Tsukishima was thinking very deeply, worrying that he might get into the same situation as Kuroo.

**If Hinata has the power to wrap someone like Kuroo around her little finger, there is a good chance that she can attract others â€" is this what Yamaguchi meant when he said that the seniors are protecting her in order to keep the boys from trouble?**

And then he asked himself again: _**Am I getting soft towards Hinata

Shouyou?*_

Realizing that Yamaguchi and Kageyama might be correct, Tsukishima had decided to make sure that he will not let a single day pass by without insulting Hinata.

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Next chapter involves tasers (yes, TASERS!) and probably some squeal-worthy moments. And I'm probably narrowing the love connections soon, so NOMINATE A SHIP before I begin sinking some of them.

Sorry for the late update, I had been partying yesterday, celebrating the birthday of my husband Aomine Daiki (for all of you who haven't read my profile, I am Aomine's waifuâ€|don't judge me!), as well as the birthday of Asuka Kazama and (okay, fine) Hatsune Miku.

Don't forget to leave a review!

7. Chapter 7

Edited: (9/8/2014)

READ THIS!

NOTE: I HAVE EDITED CHAPTER SIX, PUTTING SOME STUFF AND REMOVING SOME STUFF. YOU MAY REREAD IT IF YOU LIKE, OR IN CASE YOU FIND THE EVENTS FRUSTRATING. AND I HAVEN'T EDITED THIS CHAPTER YET, SO PARDON ME FOR THE TYPO ERRORS AND THE GRAMMATICAL ERRORS.

ANOTHER NOTE: HAVE YOU NOMINATED YOUR HINA OTP? MY CANNONS ARE READY, AND I'LL SINK SOME SHIPS ANYTIME SOON. I'M ASKING THIS BECAUSE LET'S FACE IT, EVEN HAREMS HAVE A MAIN COUPLE (THE MOTHER SHIP, AS I CALL IT).

**LAST NOTE: TELL ME YOUR SHIP (JUST 1 SHIP!) BY REVIEWING!
:3**

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Chapter 7: Senpai Noticed Me (Uh oh) â€" Part 2

"What?"

Not only did Hinata's eyes widen at what she heard. Her mouth opened of its own accord, her jaw dropping in total disbelief.

The girls looked at her, wondering if they had said something offensive.

"Aren't you coming to the bath with us?" they repeated their question to her.

Hinata swallowed hard. It was one thing to join the girls at the table for dinner, but to take a bath with them? Hinata may have turned into a girl, but her heart had always been the same.

__**I'm still a guy, for heaven's sake!**__

She gave Yachi and Shimizu a look, pleading for help. Clearly Hinata had no idea how to get out of this. Both girls, however, lacked any proper alibi to cover for her.

Disappointed that the two managers could not offer her assistance, Hinata tried to come up with something.

"Um, you girls go on ahead!" Hinata said with a fake smile. "Iâ€¦I'll just take a bath later."

"Eh? But Hina-chan, the bath will close soon. You need to clean up right away." said one girl.

"And you are tired and sweaty after playing volleyball with the guys," added another.

"Come, we'll scrub you if you want!"

Hinata's cheeks flushed hard as she shook her head rapidly. "N-no! You don't have toâ€¦besides, I-I'm really not comfortable when other people see me nakedâ€¦"

"You're feeling insecure about yourself?" the girls seemed incredulous.

"But Hina-chan's so pretty!"

"Right! All the guys are into you. Even Kuroo-san from Nekoma can't take his eyes off you."

Hinata could not understand what the girls were talking about, because all she wanted was to get out of the situation.

"Hinata!"

Thankfully, Sugawara came to save the day. Well, technically, evening. He smiled at Yachi and Shimizu, before patting Hinata's head gently, like an affectionate parent to his daughter.

"Shouko-chan, your cousin has called," Suga spoke without a trace of untruthfulness in his voice.

"Do you have a minute? He wants to talk to you."

Hinata nodded, relieved to leave the ladies, who reluctantly walked away to the bathroom.

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"Thanks for saving me, Suga-san," Hinata whispered happily as they walked away from the girls.

"No problem," Sugawara answered with a kind smile.

"We had promised to your father that we'll protect you while you're here."

Hinata frowned. "I'm sorry to cause you a lot of troubleâ€¦"

"No, it's okay. I kind of like the feeling of being overprotective to my little sister." Suga had toothy grin on his face.

"Little sister?" Hinata looked at her senpai, puzzled.

Sugawara chuckled softly as he gently pinched Hinata's cheek.

"Why, I'm talking about you, of course!"

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"Come again?"

Tsukishima was among the first to take a nice, warm bath that evening, but deep inside he felt messed up after hearing Sugawara's sudden request.

"I said, you go guard the men's bathroom while Hinata takes a bath." Suga spoke nonchalantly.

â€¦_**Seriously?**_

"Why me?" Tsukishima could not help but ask.

Sugawara gave a stone cold smile. "Why not?" he answered in an unusually deadly tone.

Tsukishima however, was unfazed. "Why not ask Kageyama instead? He and Hinata get along better. Hinata and I areâ€¦" He was surprised to find his next statement somewhat stung his heart.

"We don't even like each other."

"That's exactly the point," Suga smiled. "You dislike Hinata. Then you have no problem when it comes to _**keeping an eye on her**_."

**Oh.**

Tsukishima had easily understood the point of his senpai, and he did

not like it at all.

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"Soâ€|you're here because Sugawara-san told you to do so?"

Even if Tsukishima was simply following Sugawara's command, Hinata was nonetheless surprised to see the tall blonde actually do the task of keeping an eye on her as she went to the men's bathroom. The girls, out of their nature, took their time bathing in the women's room. Hinata had made up her mind not to join the girls during bath time (Hinata was still a dude at heart), so Sugawara decided that she secretly use the men's bathroom once all of the dudes were done.

Tsukishima leaned against the wall in the corridor, avoiding her lovely brown eyes. Ever since dinnertime, he had felt uneasy being around her. And the fact that he had to accompany her â€" the fact that it was just him and Hinata together â€" made things worse.

"Hurry up," Tsukishima spoke in utter exasperation. He was desperate to get back to the sleeping quarters, where he would be away from the adorable gingerhead.

Hinata raised an eyebrow, wondering what she had done to make the tall guy look so annoyed.

"Fine," she grumbled, before entering the bathroom and sliding the door closed.

Tsukishima heaved an exhausted sigh, and thought about random things while he kept watch for anyone who might enter the men's room. He could not listen to music at that time, for he might not hear the footsteps of anyone who might pass by. So he simply distracted himself by thinking of insults to use against Hinata for tomorrow.

For the first time in his life, Tsukishima had actually thought of something for another person.

**I'm thinking of proper insults to give to a girl. How sweet,** he thought sarcastically.

Then a voice coming from around the corner of the hallway suddenly burst Tsukishima's thought bubble.

"What? You're done bathing too, Kenma?" spoke Tetsurou Kuroo.

"So the bathroom's now all mine."

Panic filled Tsukishima's entire body. Kuroo was the last person whom he hoped to encounter while Hinata was taking a bath.

In an act of instinct, he dashed into the men's bathroom.

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It was hard to tell which one of them was shocked: Hinata or Tsukishima. Either way, neither of them expected to be in the bathroom together at the same time. No way in a million years. Never in an eternity.

Tsukishima was momentarily stunned upon seeing Hinata sitting in the small pool. The steam coming from the warm bath, as well as the fact that she was immersed deep in the water made him see only her head and shoulders, but that was enough to make his face turn scarlet. Hinata's brown eyes were half-lidded by the relaxing sensation caused by the hot bath, and her skin had a pleasant, rosy pink glow.

"W-what are you doing here?" Hinata tried to cover herself in embarrassment, and Tsukishima found it strangely alluring.

**Damn it, get moving!**

Tsukishima composed himself. Quickly, he grabbed some towels and tossed one to Hinata.

"Kuroo's coming," the tall blonde said while helping ginger-haired girl get out of the water.

"Get out of here before he sees you."

**God knows what that shrewd can do to you,** Tsukishima added, although he did not voice it out.

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Kuroo lazily trod his way towards the men's bathroom. The ace player of Fukurodani Academy, Bokuto Kotarou, had been bothering him around after dinner. It took the bedhead a long while before he could get rid of the said nuisance, and so he was very glad when he finally got the chance to plunge into the relaxing hot bath.

When he turned around the corner, however, he stopped dead in his tracks.

The tall blonde middle blocker from Karasuno " Tsukishima - sped out of the men's bathroom, holding a small person wrapped in bath towel as they ran to the other end of the hallway.

**Judging by the build of the shorter person, it could only be the libero, or the feisty little miss who played Shinzen a while ago.**

Kuroo scowled in total displeasure. He disliked the idea right

away.

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**What the hell am I doing?** Tsukishima asked himself.

He dragged Hinata away from the men's bathroom as quickly and as carefully as possible. The last thing they wanted to happen was for the other people to hear them running away from Kuroo.

"Hurry up," Tsukishima hissed, holding Hinata's hand firmly. Her skin felt moist and warm after the bath, and the tall, blonde middle blocker could not help but feel strange inside.

They almost reached the sleeping quarters of Karasuno when they met another member of Nekoma – Yamamoto Taketora, who gaped at the sight of Tsukishima with the cute ginger-haired girl. Hinata and Tsukishima skidded into a halt, shocked.

"What –" Yamamoto could not believe his eyes. His face flushed red as he saw that the girl was only wearing a towel around her slim body.

A gloved hand suddenly covered the Mohawk-haired spiker's mouth. Yamamoto struggled to set himself free, but he was struck by the electrifying end of a taser, sending him unconscious on the floor.

"Huh?" both of Karasuno's middle blockers were dumbstruck when they realized that the person who tasered Yamamoto was Sugawara.

"Hurry up," Sugawara beckoned them into the sleeping quarters.

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"Suga-san – you can be a good assassin someday, you know?" Hinata said once she and Tsukishima made it to the sleeping quarters.

Sugawara kicked all of the other boys out of the room for a while, until Hinata had finally put on some clothes. She wore one of Tsukishima's long-sleeved sweaters for the meantime.

"I don't think that was a compliment." Suga said with a smile.

Hinata sighed in exhaustion, her face a picture of worry. "You think Yamamoto-san will tell others what he saw?"

"He might think it was just a dream," Sugawara said with a smile. "But, in any case, we're ready to silence him."

**Creepy,** thought Hinata. She had never thought she would see Sugawara's dark side. In fact, she never thought he had one, until now.

They heard a knock on the door. Sugawara finally let the other boys, who were slightly irritated for being kicked out of the room.

"What was that all about, Suga?" Sawamura was annoyed.

"Sorry," Sugawara did not bother to explain himself.

"Is that Tsukki's sweater?" Yamaguchi pointed at what Hinata was wearing.

"Yeah," Hinata answered nonchalantly.

"Eeeh?!" Nishinoya was not pleased.

"What's that noise for, Noya?" Tanaka raised an eyebrow in annoyance.

"A girl wearing a guy's shirt?" Noya spoke loudly.

"Only couples do that!"

Silence filled the entire room for a moment. Sugawara glanced at both Hinata and Tsukishima. Neither one of them could not suppress their cheeks from blushing.

"Return that right away," Tsukishima suddenly said.

"Tomorrow," Hinata replied, glancing away from the tall blonde guy.

"It's not like I want to keep it, anyway. It's too huge."

"No, it's not." Tsukishima smirked. "You're just too small."

"S-shut up!"

Sugawara sighed. He knew that things had become awkward since Hinata became a girl.

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Kozume Kenma was definitely not a morning person. Come to think of it, one can consider it a miracle if you ever find Kenma wide awake early in the morning. Not that he's a lazy boy or anything. It was just that Kenma was the kind of kid whose energy is saved for certain things: like videogames, volleyball, and thinking critically.

He had been doing a lot of critical thinking recently.

His genius mind was still engrossed in analyzing the events that happened yesterday: Hinata Shouyou's absence, his mysterious cousin's

appearance, Kuroo's strange behavior.

**Well, there's nothing strange about Kuroo's behavior,** Kenma thought in slight annoyance.

**He's just head over heels in love with her.**

Although it was too early for him to make a conclusion, Kenma was pretty much sure that his longtime friend had fallen in love at first sight with Shouyou's adorable cousin, Hinata Shouko.

But there are going to be problems, for sure.

**One was that Karasuno would not easily give Hinata Shouko away. That, and the fact that she might not return Kuroo's feelings. Moreoverâ€¦**

When Kenma took an early morning walk outside the premises, he saw Hinata Shouko practicing receives with Kageyama and Nishinoya.

**There are his rivalsâ€¦**

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"Too low!"

It was still early in the morning, but the trio of Hinata, Kageyama and Nishinoya were already making a loud noise at a small volleyball court outside the gymnasium. They took the chance of practicing early while the others were still asleep, Kageyama doing his nasty serves while Hinata and Noya try to receive them.

"Watch this," Nishinoya told Hinata as Kageyama prepares another hard serve. The libero lowered his stance, bracing himself to receive the ball.

The raven-haired setter did another one of his inhumanly strong serves. It hurled to the far left side of the court, but Noya was very quick on his feet and immediately received the ball.

"Gwaaaaaaaaaaaaah!" Hinata was amazed, as always.

"What do you call that move, Noya-san?!"

"An ordinary receive?" Kageyama bluntly muttered.

"That was no ordinary receive," Hinata told him. "Your serves are most likely to penetrate a brick wall, Kageyama!"

"My serves are slightly out of the ordinary," Kageyama answered in a defiant tone.

"You just receive the ball horribly, Hinata."

"Hey, I'm trying hard to receive your impossible serves!" Hinata pouted.

Kageyama fought the urge to comment something about her cute pouty face. "Then try harder! You want to beat Shiratorizawa, right?"

All that time, Kenma had been watching them from afar. He could not help but look at the trio suspiciously. He found their conversation very strange.

__**It seems like they're talking to Shouyou himselfâ€|and what's with Shouko hoping to beat Shiratorizawa?*_

"Why are you just standing there?"

Kenma quickly looked over his shoulders and was surprised to find Tsukishima, who was giving him a smug look.

"Youâ€|" Kenma was shocked, although it was hard to tell from his face. He had not realized that the tall middle blocker of Karasuno was already standing behind him.

Tsukishima walked past Kenma as if he hadn't seen him at all. The tall young man walked towards his team mates, whose eyebrows arched at the sight of him.

"You guys are up very early," Tsukishima told Hinata, Kageyama and Nishinoya.

Kageyama nodded in greeting, but spoke to the derisive blond guy in an angry tone. "Same to you."

"I couldn't sleep well last night." Tsukishima, however, would never tell that he had insomnia because he had been thinking of all the proper insults he shall use against Hinata in the future.

His eyes met Hinata's, and it took him a while before he could manage to bravely not avert his gaze out of shyness. It was not easy, especially after the events that happened between them yesterday evening.

"Are you practicing your horrible receives?" he asked in a mocking voice.

Hinata furrowed her eyebrows in irritation. "I already know I'm horrible when it comes to basic moves. You guys don't have to remind me."

Tsukishima smiled, happy to give his first insult for the day. He tried to come up with another one.

"Hey, I'm trying to become a good team mate here. I'll remind you everyday if you want."

"No thanks." Hinata would never give Glasses the satisfaction of teasing her every single day.

In an effort to put an end to the two middle blockers' bickering, Noya tossed the volleyball to Tsukishima, who caught it with one hand.

"Oi, Tsukki! Now that you're here, why don't you play with us?" Nishinoya said cheerfully.

"I'll pass," Tsukishima declined the offer. After what happened last night, he thought about not having too much physical contact with Hinata for a while. He then pointed a thumb at Kenma.

"Why not ask **_**him**_** instead?"

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Kenma had no idea how he suddenly got to play an unofficial match with Hinata, Kageyama, and Nishinoya. The last he remembered, the tall guy named Tsukishima suddenly suggested that he would play with them. Now they were playing outside, a two-on-two match, with pairings decided by a coin toss: Kageyama and Nishinoya, against him and Hinata.

I hope Kuroo's still asleep,**** Kenma thought. He had already seen the threatening look Kuroo gave Lev yesterday. He doubted that Kuroo would spare him even if they were friends.

"Why is Kageyama the one serving the ball?" Hinata whined.

"What, you find it scary?" Tsukishima spoke with a smug grin. He stood at the side of the court, as a referee.

"Shut up."

Kenma sighed deeply. He could not believe he got pulled into playing with these energetic people. And it was a ridiculous-looking two-on-two match: neither pair has the potential to properly pull off the basic moves. Kageyama was paired to Nishinoya, who was a libero, but neither Kenma nor Hinata had enough capabilities to defend from any attacks.

And, at least, Kageyama can win this game, even through service aces.****

"Whatever," Hinata said. "I'll just receive your serves as much as I can!"

"Good." Kageyama replied, and he did one of his inhumanly strong serves once again.

It was a quick and very strong serve, but unfortunately it had to much force that it went overhead Hinata and Kenma. Tsukishima stifled a laugh, and so did Nishinoya, much to Kageyama's chagrin.

"Looks like I don't have to try receiving that much," Hinata spoke jokingly.

"Shut up and get the ball, dumbass," Kageyama growled.

"Okay, fine." Hinata chuckled. She then went away to search for the

volleyball.

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Kageyama's serve had been too strong, that the raven-haired setter might as well have used a rocket launcher. It annoyed Hinata that she had to rummage through the bushes in search of the volleyball. She literally dived headfirst into the shrubs, looking for it.

"Is this what you're looking for?"

Hinata popped out of the bush upon hearing a smooth, low voice. Tetsurou Kuroo stood there, watching her amusedly, with the missing volleyball in his hand.

"You've found it!" Hinata cried in relief.

Kuroo smiled, and tossed the ball to the ginger-haired girl, who clumsily caught it with delicate hands.

"Thanks." Hinata said with a sincere smile. Her face was a bit dirty because of looking through the shrubs. Her hair was also messy and tangled, with tiny leaves clinging around.

**And she still looks unbelievably cute,** Kuroo thought.

"You're playing volleyball this early?" he asked coyly as to grab the opportunity to remove the leaves on Hinata's sunfire hair.

"Yeah," Hinata, being too innocent for her own good, stood still and allowed him to do as he pleased.

"We're having a two-on-two match."

"We?" Kuroo raised an eyebrow inquiringly.

"Me, Kageyama, Nishinoya-senpai, and Kenma."

"Kenma?" Kuroo could not hold back the slight surprise in his voice.

**Since when did he get up so early?** The bedhead thought in wonder.

"You can join us, if you want," Hinata grinned from ear to ear. "Tsukishima is also with us. Maybe we can have a three-on-three then."

"Tsukishima, huh?" Kuroo remembered what he had seen last night at the bathroom.

"Maybe I'll join." He gave one of his innocent, but nonetheless devious smiles.

"Say, are you planning to ask Coach Nekomata to let you participate in the games today?" he asked all of a sudden.

"I'm not hopeful that he'll allow me again, but yeah," Hinata answered.

"Hmm" Kuroo paused for a while to think.

"I might be able to help you with that, you know."

"Really?" Hinata was wide-eyed now, more optimistic about having another chance to play in the practice games.

"Sure." Kuroo smiled 'innocently' at her.

"Hey, why don't we make a deal?"

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"What's taking that idiot so long?" Kageyama said, getting impatient because Hinata had been away for too long.

"It's your fault for making a ridiculous serve," Nishinoya rebutted the raven-haired setter.

Kenma would have taken Hinata's long absence as an opportunity for him to leave the place, had not Hinata arrived " together with Kuroo, of all people.

The boys of Karasuno had been quite surprised at the bed-haired captain of Nekoma's sudden appearance. Kuroo came, wearing his usual devious smile, but this time his cat-eyes had a slightly cold glare, particularly when he stared at the tall blond guy, Tsukishima.

"Mind if I join?" he asked. "Your friend Shouko here says it's okay."

"No problem!" Nishinoya said cheerfully, although he looked " and felt " awkward.

"I'll just go back inside." Tsukishima was smart enough to understand that Kuroo had a grudge against him, although he had no idea why.

"No way!" Hinata said. "You're joining us. Let's toss a coin again so that we can arrange our teams." She walked towards Kageyama and grinned at the raven-haired setter.

"Hey, cresthead says he's gonna help me persuade Coach Nekomata to allow me to join today's games."

"Really?" Kageyama raised an eyebrow, puzzled. Why on earth would Kuroo want to help her?

"Yeah, but we had to win the game against Nekoma, though." Hinata smiled.

"Kuroo-san says that if we lose, I have to become the temporary

manager of Nekoma until the end of this training camp, or at least until we win against them."

Kageyama's eyes widened in horror. "You WHAT?!"

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Haha, okay. I have reread the manga, and around the 81**st**** or 82****nd**** chapters of Haikyuu! Was the 2****nd**** day of the Tokyo training camp, where the first game had been Karasuno vs. Nekoma, so I timed it properly.**

I'm planning to make a TsukiHina vs. KuroHina for the meantime. But don't worry, there'll be OiHina vs KageHina as well, and NishiHina vs. KenHina soon.

PLEASE LEAVE A REVIEW.

8. Chapter 8

Yo minna!

Chapter Eight is here! I'm glad you guys give reviews, I appreciate the criticisms (although I didn't get to do much about them, gomen) and I'm happy that you guys participate in the MOTHER SHIP ELECTIONS

Thank you so much for telling me your OTP! I guess I'll only close the voting once I manage to make some squeal-worthy moments out of all the possible ships in Haikyuu! (mind you, ALL the possible ships are canon or non-canon! This is gonna take a while to write)

But, anyway, this chapter is the WAR FOR HINA-CHAN'S FREEDOM (and probably, heart)!.TBH I've been looking forward to write this part XD

Gosh, I hope I did not turn Kuroo into a Yandere or something. But to me he's a Hottie-dere. Just saying :3

I hope you enjoy!

Douzo!

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Chapter 8: The Face that Launched a Thousand Volleyballs are Part 1

The guys of Karasuno had never been _**this**_ tense before a game.

At this moment, it felt more like a life-or-death situation for them.

Just over-exaggerating here.

The thing was, the whole team of Karasuno was essentially in panic after they had found out about the deal between Hinata and Nekoma High's captain, Tetsurou Kuroo, right before the beginning of their first practice match for the day.

"Why did you agree to such a thing?" Kageyama was utterly frustrated at Hinata's sudden decision.

"I did not think it's such a big deal," Hinata shrugged her shoulders casually as she replied.

"It's not like I could no longer play volleyball if I lose. If we win this, I can participate in all of the practice matches, even in Saitama."

"But you have to become Nekoma's manager if we lose," Sugawara said. The way he folded his arms across his chest and the serious look on his face were clear signs that he was not his usually calm self.

"It's just fine, isn't it?" Hinata told him. "I mean, the guys from Nekoma are our friends."

Kageyama made a grunting noise, openly showing his annoyance towards the sudden predicament given by the gingerhead.

"It's true, but still—" Sugawara frowned worryingly. Nekoma had been very nice to Karasuno, but the incident with Yamamoto last night disturbed him. Moreover, it was not hard to see that Kuroo had his own motives for having a bet with Hinata.

"Hinata," Sawamura was equally bothered at the situation.

"Cancel the deal between you and Kuroo."

"Eh?!" Hinata was horrified, not understanding the reason behind the team's disapproval.

Sugawara glanced at the bench area of Nekoma and frowned deeply. "Unfortunately, it's too late for that."

The rest of them glanced his way, and saw Kuroo already talking to Coach Nekomata.

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"What is this bet all about?" Coach Nekomata spoke disapprovingly.

"Come on, now, it's not a big deal," said Kuroo airily. "You'll just

allow her to play in the practice games, just like yesterday. If Karasuno wins, she can play anytime she wants. But if Karasuno loses the game, she'll have to work as a manager for us, until they win against us."

The old man sat in his chair, eyeing the bed-haired captain suspiciously. It was not unknown to the rest of the team that Kuroo was interested with Hinata Shouyou's cousin, but Coach Nekomata had never thought that the young man would go so far just to get the girl closer to him.

"This is a training camp, lad," Coach Nekomata spoke very seriously.

"I hope you remember the reason why we're here."

"I do remember why I am here," Kuroo grinned slyly.

"I don't understand your motives anymore, Kuroo. Why do you have to make her our temporary manager?"

"You still don't get it? I need to concentrate a lot right now." Kuroo said, flustering the coach further.

"Get to the point, Kuroo, or you'll be doing flying falls on your own all day." Nekomata spoke angrily.

"Coach, I need to focus on my game," Kuroo said, taking a momentary glance at Hinata who was doing stretches.

"I can't do that while she's on a different side of the court."

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Tanaka observed everyone else as they began to do stretching exercises, warming up before the game. There was a heavy air all over Karasuno's side of the court, and he found it strangely creepy.

His team mates had never looked so serious before.

His eyes drifted on Nishinoya. The Guardian Deity had been frighteningly silent this morning. His golden brown eyes were extremely focused on the game, as if he has the burden of winning this practice match.

To be honest, Tanaka felt the same way.

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Nishinoya quietly stretched his arms and legs as he meditated about the game ahead. He was very determined to win this one, and all other

games against Nekoma afterwards.

"**It was my fault that Hinata became a girl,**" he thought gravely.

"**That's why I promised to myself that I will help her.**"

Done with stretching his limbs, he stood up from the floor, his gaze sending shivers down everyone's spine.

"**I will protect her as well.**"

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"I can't believe Nekoma's coach would agree to this," muttered Takeda-sensei as Karasuno and Nekoma lined up on the court.

"The old guy probably thinks it isn't bad to tolerate a little bet," said Coach Ukai. He looked distraught, and the teacher immediately noticed it.

"Is there a problem?"

"Yes, I think so," Ukai admitted. "I just don't think Hinata should've made a deal with Nekoma's captain."

Takeda looked at Nekoma's side of the court, where Kuroo gathered his teammates for a final briefing.

"How come?" he asked.

"Iâ€¦I don't know," Ukai was really troubled.

"I just think that their captain is the kind of guy who gambles only when he knows he's going to win."

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Kuroo gathered his teammates, smiling at them in a handsome but nevertheless suspicious manner.

"If we win this, we get a cute little manager for our team," he spoke as if the team was about to win the championship trophy.

"Orrryaaa!" Yamamoto got excited all of a sudden.

"I really don't understand what is going on," said Yaku with furrowed eyebrows.

"I understand what's going on, and I don't like it." Kenma spoke openly against Kuroo.

"Come on, this is just a simple bet," Kuroo said airily. "I don't think your friend Shouyou would mind."

**He would if he knows your motives,** Kenma thought, hoping that he knew how to contact Shouyou.

"I'm playing against the cute girl! Cool!" Lev said excitedly.

Kuroo clapped the half-Russian's back a little too hard. "If you make any errors, Lev, I'll smack you."

He then turned to the rest of the team.

"Let's have some fun, shall we?"

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Karasuno was holding its own meeting as well. The team's starting lineup gathered together, forming a small circle on the court. There was the oddball duo Hinata and Kageyama, the libero Nishinoya, along with Asahi, Tanaka and Sawamura.

"We'll take this game seriously, get it?" Sawamura said, although the look on his teammates' faces showed that they did not need reminding.

"Osu!"

"Good. Let's get going."

As they broke apart, Kageyama could not help but hit the back of Hinata's head with the palm of his hand.

"Ow! What was that for?" Hinata said, giving the raven-haired setter an angry look.

"We're playing for your freedom here," Kageyama said in a serious tone.

"You better not miss the ball."

The setter went to his place afterwards. Hinata stared at him in wonder. She felt as if Kageyama was simply showing concern towards her.

"Oi, get moving, Hinata!" Tanaka was the one assaulting her skull this time, by rubbing her head and messing her hair.

"You better do your quicks well, or you go to the other side after this!"

"I understand that!" Hinata said while smiling at him.

"Good," Tanaka sounded grim all of a sudden. "Let's not lose this game."

The war has begun.

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After a coin toss, it was decided that Nekoma would be the one to serve the ball. Kageyama took a moment to observe Nekoma's lineup: the vanguard included Yamamoto, the half-Russian middle blocker Lev, and the vice captain Nobuyuki, while the rear guard consisted of the setter Kenma, the libero named Yaku, and Mr. Bedhead himself, Tetsurou Kuroo.

_"**The lineup's odd, but the way I see itâ€¦|**_Kageyama thought gravely.

"**Nekoma's defense is going to be a big trouble to us if we can't do anything against it.**

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"Nice serve, Kenma!"

Kenma's lazy serve was easily received by Sawamura, who passed it directly to Kageyama.

"**We're playing for your freedom here. You better not miss the ball.**

Hinata was already on her feet the moment Kageyama touched the volleyball, setting it high in the air. The ball's direction was already pinpointed, she jumped high and, out of reflex, she inevitably closed her eyes and hit the ball with a sudden force that left the blockers speechless.

"Gwaaah! I didn't miss!" Hinata squealed happily. She turned her head towards Kageyama. "'You seen that?"

Back at Nekoma's side of the court, Lev looked behind him, right at the spot where the volleyball hurled past.

"Cool." He gushed excitedly. He then looked at the petite gingerhead who had just scored Karasuno's first point of the game.

He could not help but smile in anticipation.

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Meanwhile, on the bench side of Karasuno, Coach Ukai and the rest of the team could not avoid feeling tense while watching the practice

game.

"I can't believe everyone's feeling pressured right now," Yachi murmured to herself.

"This might be hard for them, especially Hinataâ€|"

"No, I think it's the other way around," said Shimizu. The younger manager glanced at her, honestly puzzled.

"I don't think Hinata would mind being Nekoma's temporary manager if she loses the game, for as long as she gets a chance to play," Shimizu said. "I believe the burden is on the other boysâ€|"

**Funny that it isn't the damsel who's in distress right now,**
Yachi smiled while thinking.

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"Another quick!"

"Move faster, Lev!" Kenma yelled in frustration.

The half-Russian has been missing the first three quick strikes that Karasuno's oddball duo had been hurling at Nekoma so far. The crows were leading the first set by two points, much to the cats' surprise.

**They're more focused today,** Kenma observed.

**They surely won't give her up.**

"I think I can catch up soon," Lev suddenly spoke to no one in particular.

"Come again?" Kenma raised an eyebrow at him.

"The cute girl's quick strikes, I mean," Lev smiled, in a confident but at the same time honest, unadulterated manner. "I'll get to block them before this game is over."

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"We're doing well," Sawamura said. "Keep it up!"

"Osu!" the rest of the starting lineup responded.

Things seemed to work well for Karasuno during the first set, but Kageyama was not to let his guard down just yet. The half-Russian has been the one tasked to mark Hinata. Lev was considered a newbie in volleyball, and his basic skills were undeniably worse than Hinata's,

but with his height and reflexes, he surely had the chance to block the tiny decoy.

"Oi, oi, you look too tense, Kageyama!" Nishinoya suddenly shoved the back of the raven-haired setter.

"No, I'm not," Kageyama denied grumpily.

Noya gave him a taut smile. "Yes, you are. And usually, that's a sign that you're about to mess things up."

Kageyama's eyes widened. The lively, short-legged upperclassman had never been this blunt towards him before.

Nishinoya grinned from ear to ear, changing his mood all of a sudden. "All I'm saying is keep up the good work, Kageyama!"

"Uh. Yeah." Kageyama swallowed hard; the Guardian Deity was totally in a bad mood at that moment.

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Nishinoya was truly not happy with what was going on. Sure, Karasuno was leading the first set, but Nekoma was only two points behind. The Guardian Deity had been trying more than his best just to make sure the volleyball would not fall onto Karasuno's side of the court, but the spikers have been giving them a hard time.

__**We owe our two-point advantage to Hinata and Kageyama,**_ Noya said to himself.

__**But the rest of us have to do our part as well. It can't be just the two of themâ€¦,**_

"Chance ball!" Sawamura shouted.

"I'll get it!" Nishinoya flawlessly received the ball and sent it to the setter.

Hinata braced herself to jump once again, but Kageyama sent the ball to Tanaka, who forcefully spiked the ball between Nobuyuki and Yamamoto. Kenma, who was standing close to where the ball hit barely made an effort to run after the ball, apparently ignoring it on purpose.

"Darn it!" Yamamoto growled in frustration.

"The hell are you avoiding the ball for, Kenma?!" Coach Nekomata whined.

"That spike would tear my arm off," Kenma muttered unenthusiastically.

"ORYAAAAAAAAAAAAA!" Tanaka shouted energetically.

"Like hell we'll give Hinata to you!"

"Nice spike, Tanaka-san!" Hinata raised a hand and gave monkhead a high five.

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"This is bad," Kuroo muttered slyly. Kenma glanced at him, wondering why the bed-haired captain was still cool despite that Karasuno was taking over the first set.

"Do you have a plan in mind?" Kenma asked casually.

Kuroo gave him a sidelong look. There was a glint of shrewdness in those golden orbs, as if the captain knew a secret and was thinking twice about telling it to Kenma.

"Wellâ€¦" he smiled innocently afterwards. "To be honest, I'm only praying that you guys are more committed to this game like I do."

Kenma scowled. He knew Kuroo better than anybody else, and he was certain that the bedhead was up to something.

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The first set had been a long, tough battle, but Karasuno shed a lot of sweat to win it in the end. A time out was called, and the teams gathered at their own bench areas.

"You're doing very well!" Sugawara told Hinata and the rest of the starting lineup.

"To be honest, I never thought we'd get the first setâ€¦" Sawamura said.

"Right." Kageyama agreed as he stole a sidelong look at Nekoma's bench side. Kuroo was having a long talk with the coach and the rest of the team's lineup. There was a wide grin on Captain Bedhead's face, and the raven-haired setter disliked it.

"We'd better be careful in the next set."

"Their blockers are going to be tough in the next rotation, so we need to adjust," Coach Ukai said.

"We don't have to have a vanguard showdown with them. What we need is to properly cover the floor." He looked at Sawamura and Nishinoya.

"I'll leave it to you."

"Osu," Nishinoya and Sawamura nodded in reply.

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Nekoma were making their own plans as well when they were gathering at their bench area.

"How much time do you need, Lev?" Kuroo asked the half-Russian all of a sudden.

Everyone turned their eyes on the bed-haired captain, whose eyebrows arched in surprise.

"I thought you guys already know," Kuroo said casually.

"We used the first set to see how we can adapt to the superhuman duo's quicks."

"It wouldn't hurt to tell us beforehand," Kenma could feel the veins popping on his temple. His emotions were getting the better of him recently.

Coach Nekomata heaved an exhausted sigh. "Of course. That's the plan, all right."

Kuroo shrugged, as if they weren't under pressure. "Very well. I guess it won't take long before we can block those inhuman quicks. Lev," he eyed the half-Russian sternly.

"We're taking the second set, so you better get moving."

"No problem." Lev answered cheerfully.

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As Kageyama had predicted, the second set proved to be a tough fight. Yaku and Nobuyuki had been moved in and out of the court that the vanguard lineup now included Kuroo, Kenma and Lev.

"Oh, this is tough." Tsukishima muttered on the benchside. He seemed to be very focused on the game. So far the second set was in favor of Nekoma. Karasuno hadn't made another rotation after Kuroo's movement to the front with Kenma and Lev.

"Indeed." Coach Ukai said under his breath. He was thinking deeply about how to counter the current vanguard of Nekoma.

"Even if we place Tsukishima in front, we still lack offense. We can send our attacks to Kenma, who seemed the least committed of all the players on Nekoma's side, but Kuroo obviously knows thatâ€¦"

Tsukishima heard the coach's dilemma, and he could not help but

frown. Nekoma's third year middle blocker was no fool, and surely had a lot of tricks up his sleeve.

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Nishinoya barely saved the volleyball hurled down by the bed-haired captain. Karasuno's libero gritted his teeth in frustration. Kuroo accurately aimed a spot where Noya was least likely able to receive, and he would have made a kill had not Noya been quick on his feet deliberately dived for the ball.

"Chance ball!" Yaku received the ball and naturally sent it to Kenma, who gave it to Lev. The lanky half-Russian did one of his whip-like spikes and knocked Hinata down as she had tried to block it.

"Ow." Hinata winced as she slowly got up. Kageyama helped her up almost instinctively, holding her hand gingerly as if he was afraid he might break her.

"Thanks." She smiled at the raven-haired setter, who glanced away blushing.

"Ngh." He made an indistinct tone to say it was nothing.

Kenma stole a sidelong look at Kuroo, and noticed the captain's cool demeanor disappearing for a moment. Kuroo's eyebrows were forming furrows in the middle of his forehead, and his cat eyes were unusually intense.

**Kuroo,** Kenma thought worryingly. _**Don't let your weakness show to them.**_

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"Actually, that might workâ€¦|" Tsukishima murmured amusedly all of a sudden.

"What is?" Yamaguchi asked.

The tall blonde had been observing Nekoma's side ever since the start of the second set. Eyeing the vanguard, he had noticed something remarkable, and something that Karasuno could use to their advantage.

"Some sort of idea to win," Tsukishima spoke evenly.

"You've been thinking of a strategy?" Yamaguchi said with a look of disbelief.

"Yeah." Glasses looked at his friend quizzically. "What?"

Yamaguchi grinned at Tsukishima, who frowned in suspicion.

"What is it, Yamaguchi?"

Yamaguchi shook his head. "Nothing, Tsukki. This is the first time I've seen you look so determined to win a game. "

Tsukishima could not understand why it seemed such a big deal to his friend. He was not determined to win this game at all. It was just a morning practice match, for heaven's sake.

"And to think that you don't like Hinata!" Yamaguchi went on. "I thought you'd take this game less seriously so that she won't be on our side for a while."

At this, the tall blond middle blocker glowered at Yamaguchi. "Shut up."

For the first time in his life, Yamaguchi gave him a superior look. "Just tell them your strategy, Tsukki."

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In the middle of the second set, Karasuno suddenly called a time out. Hinata, Kageyama, Nishinoya, Sawamura and Tanaka gathered with the rest of the team around Coach Ukai.

"We're getting crushed in this set." Ukai the Younger said worryingly.

"Nishinoya, we'll take you out later on." He told the libero, who looked reluctant to get out of the court despite the fatigue showing on his face. Coach Ukai glanced uncomfortably at Tsukishima, who jolted upon being nudged by Yamaguchi. There was something unusual about the pair that day. Something about Tsukishima being the hesitant one, and Yamaguchi being persuasive that it was already out of his character.

"Tsukishima has...something in mind." He beckoned the tall freshman to come forward.

"You tell them."

Tsukishima stepped forward, looking at his teammates uneasily. He was not the type who speaks up to everyone. He averted his gaze away from Hinata, who was looking at him in anticipation of a good strategy.

He shove his eyeglasses closer to his face as he spoke in an uncharacteristically nervous voice, which strangely resembled Yamaguchi's.

"This is a very simple, but quite effective trick," Tsukishima muttered the words as if he disliked the idea he was about to suggest.

"We're using a different approach against the vanguard. An indirect

kind of attack."

Everyone looked at him as if he was explaining the Theory of Relativity in French. Well, who could blame them? None of them had ever seen Tsukishima spoke up like this. In fact, none of them had even expected it.

Tsukishima heaved a sigh, and he began to explain his strategy. After which, he earned an incredulous look from his teammates.

"That's it?" Hinata reacted casually, raising an eyebrow as if she hoped for a grander idea from Tsukishima.

"What do you mean, 'that's it'?" Kageyama was annoyed. "His plan's ridiculous!"

Tsukishima folded his arms across his chest cockily. "You have a plan in mind, King?" he scoffed.

"Go on, I'm listening."

Kageyama glared at the tall blonde as if he was drilling bullet holes on the other guy's face.

Sugawara looked at the coach, who was scratching his head in confusion. He somehow pitied the coach for having to agree to such a stratagem, because Tsukishima's idea was clearly not what a normal volleyball player would suggest.

"Well," Suga spoke finally. "Nothing for it but to try, I guess."

After a final verdict, they walked back into the court.

Before the second set was over, Karasuno's team decided to follow Tsukishima's ingenious plan.

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****YAH!****

****More TsukiHina vs KuroHina in the next chapter! The part 2 of the war for Hina-chan!****

****Did you like it?****

****I think I'll add one more day for the Tokyo excursion, just to add some fluff in the KuroHina vs TsukiHina moment.****

****I've seen someone who asked for a Bokuto Kotarou x Hinata Shouyou momentâ€|you gave me an idea!****

****Review, please!.****

****Aha! Allow me to give you an update about our MOTHER SHIP
POLL:****

****So far, TsukiHina is killing it, KuroHina being the close (VERY CLOSE) second; KageHina and KenHina battling for the third position.****

****THIS IS UNOFFICIAL, SINCE THERE ARE STILL SOME OTHER SHIPS WE HAVE TO MENTION IN THE NEXT CHAPTERS (SO THE RESULTS MAY CHANGE). MOREOVER, THE FACT THAT I'M FOCUSING ON TSUKIHINA AND KUROHINA RIGHT NOW DOESN'T MEAN I'M ENDING THE STORY WITH EITHER ONE OF THE SHIPS.****

****Trust me when I say I'm going to make squeal-worthy moments for all the other ships. I'm taking this VERY SLOWLY, so calm down guys, have faith in me.****

****Chapter nine is here, minna!****

****So you're probably wondering what on earth was Tsukki going to do against Nekoma (Kuroo in particular).****

****Very well.****

****Douzo!****

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Tsukishima heaved a weary sigh. He was strangely exhausted despite that he hasn't entered the court yet. In fact, he hardly exerted any effort in the training. He simply did what was asked of him, nothing more. And yet, here he was now, taking a certain practice game more seriously than ever.

All because of a certain shrimp.****

This was the first time he actually had felt so tired during their training camp in Tokyo. Even then, he quickly noticed the sidelong glance that Yamaguchi was giving him.

"Stop behaving so weirdly, Yamaguchi." Tsukishima said, his tone frankly exasperated.

"I'm not behaving weirdly," Yamaguchi replied defiantly. "If there is anyone who's acting out of the ordinary here, it would be you, Tsukki."

Tsukishima looked at him, wide-eyed. Never in his entire life had Yamaguchi rebutted him like this. He wondered where his timid friend got the courage to openly say such words.

"How's that so?" Tsukishima asked in an inquiring, if not mocking, tone.

Yamaguchi simply smiled at him. It was not his usually shy, nervous

smile. It was a triumphant smile, a smile that meant he enjoyed having an advantage over Tsukishima.

"You'll realize it soon enough," Yamaguchi said vaguely.

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"Eh? They're not done yet?"

Fukurodani Academy's captain and ace, Bokuto Kotarou, had put an end to their match against Ubugawa, winning 2-1. The silver-haired, amber-eyed third year was somehow disappointed that Kuroo hadn't crushed Karasuno yet. The second set was taking too long that the rotation of teams was disrupted, and Ubugawa had chosen to play against Shinzen for the meantime.

"It seems that Nekoma's taking the second set, nevertheless." Fukurodani's setter Akaashi Keiji was watching the game from the side.

"Hmm. Karasuno took the first set, huh?" Bokuto was surprised; he thought the game would become a straight victory for Nekoma right away. He set his amber eyes on Karasuno's side of the court, and immediately noticed Hinata. "The cute girl's playing again?"

"Kuroo made a bet," Akaashi answered. "If Karasuno loses this game, Nekoma will take the girl as their manager."

"Seriously?! How cruel!" Bokuto exclaimed, earning him an annoyed look from his teammate. Fukurodani's ace eyed Hinata as she jumped high to make another kill.

"Knowing that crest-haired idiot, he won't stop until he gets what he wants."

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Kenma had no choice but to take the game more seriously than he had ever been. The moment he saw the intense look on Kuroo's face, he understood that things would get nasty if he won't cooperate with his childhood friend.

__**Kuroo may be devious, but he was not that hard to read.
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Despite knowing him for so long, Kenma had never seen Kuroo lose his cool in a game. If seeing Hinata smiling at another guy could enrage the bed-haired captain that easily, it would only take one person from the opposing team to use this weakness to their advantage and cause an all-out chaos in the court. Hinata was at the rear guard, and the vanguard was taken currently taken by Tanaka, Asahi and

Kageyama.

**Time to take this set...**

"I'll take it!" Yaku received the ball and sent it to Kenma.

"Here." Kenma tossed the ball to Lev instead of Kuroo. Kenma was still uncertain on whether Captain Bedhead was calm enough for the setter to entrust him a toss.

The half-Russian spiked the ball hard, accurately sending it onto Karasuno's floor. Nekoma successfully took the second set, 25-20.

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Hinata drew out a soft breath while she nervously braced herself for the third set. Nishinoya walked back into the benchside, Tsukishima walking into the court in his stead.

"I don't know how to follow your plan," she whispered as she glanced at the tall blonde. For a moment, she thought she saw a hint of smile on his lips.

"It's very simple, really." Tsukishima spoke in a whisper, as if he wanted to speak only to her, and no one else.

Hinata pouted her lips. "I'mâ€|not used to this."

**Cute as always**, Tsukishima thought amusedly.

Much to the gingerhead's surprise, the taller middle blocker patted her head gently. There was a strange reluctance in his touch, as if he had longed to touch her yet he was holding back because what he was doing was illegal.

Once Tsukishima was done patting Hinata's head like she was his illegally adopted pet kitten, he smiled at her. It was a secretive smile, not much different from Kuroo's shrewd smirk, but was uniquely his. It was a smile Hinata had never seen from Tsukishima before.

"Why don't you start with calling me by my nickname?" he spoke to her in a sweet tone.

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The third set was an intense showdown between the two teams. The rally went on and on, as neither of the teams would allow the volleyball to hit the floor. With another quick attack, Hinata managed to take the first score and rotate the lineup. Hinata and Tsukishima were at the vanguard along with Kageyama, while the rear

guard was occupied by Sawamura, Asahi and Nishinoya, who had subbed Tanaka.

Kageyama glanced at Hinata and Tsukishima uneasily. He never agreed to the plan from the start. He will never agree now.

"Nice serve, Sawamura-san!" Tanaka yelled, watching Sawamura's serve go straight to Nekoma's floor.

On Nekoma's side, it was Yamamoto who received the ball first.

"Kenma!" the Mohawk-head neatly passed the ball to the setter.

Kenma tossed the ball to Kuroo, who ran from the side of the front line and jumped to make an A-quick. The bed-haired captain touched the ball perfectly, but Tsukishima was quick on his feet and successfully blocked the ball after a properly timed jump.

"Whoa." Bokuto, who was watching from the side, whistled low under his breath in disbelief.

Kuroo watched the ball as it rolled on the floor, his face impassive, although he was quite surprised that the blonde would have the guts to deliberately block him.

Tsukishima, on the other hand, was also surprised that he blocked Kuroo. He did not show it on his face, nonetheless. He coolly shoved his eyeglasses closer to his face, and glanced at Hinata who leapt in excitement.

"Nice block!" she said proudly as if she had blocked Kuroo herself. "That was awesome, Tsukki!"

"Tsukki?!" Everyone on Karasuno's side cried in disbelief.

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Tsukki?***** Sugawara arched his eyebrows, wondering if he had misheard. Nobody has the right to call Tsukishima "Tsukki", unless he or she fulfilled the following requirements: (1) They're Yamaguchi, (2) Their hearts are strong enough to bear the stinging remarks that Tsukishima will hurl at them because he hates being called Tsukki by anyone who was not that close to him.

Hinata has probably fulfilled the second requirement, but never had she ever called Tsukishima by his nickname before. Until now.

So that's the plan?***** But Suga still could not understand how Kuroo would be affected by a name.

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**What's with the silly nickname?** Kuroo thought in annoyance. His golden cat eyes set their cold glare at the vanguard area of Karasuno, particularly to the two people right in front of him. A certain petite orange-haired girl and a tall blonde boy.

An annoying tall blond boy, to be precise.

Kuroo would never admit it, but the moment Tsukishima stepped into the court, Karasuno's smart young middle blocker got straight into his nerves as well. It made Kuroo wonder if the eyeglasses-donning blonde was actually trying to irritate him on purpose.

"What a bother." Kuroo muttered under his breath, audible enough for Kenma to hear him.

"Remember to concentrate on the game," Kenma told him plainly.

"I am concentrating," there was an edge in Kuroo's voice, which was very unusual for the cool captain of Nekoma.

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Kenma sighed in exhaustion. The thing that he has been worrying about has finally happened. Although, to be honest, he was not surprised that Tsukishima would be the first to understand Kuroo's jealousy and use it to Karasuno's advantage.

Now, Kenma has to deal with the increasing tension that was welling inside Nekoma's captain.

**What a total bother,** Kenma scowled in irritation.

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"Not a bad startâ€¦" Tsukishima whispered to himself. He knew that he was beginning to peeve Kuroo. Tsukishima would never admit it, but he was nervous about how to execute his strategy. He was used to psychologically affecting his opponents just by giving them a look that riled them up right away. But he knew that Kuroo was exactly the type of guy who does the same thing, if not better. That was why Tsukishima used Hinata against the bedhead.

"Hey," Hinata nudged him gently on the rib. "I don't know if your plan is working, Tsukki."

Tsukishima glanced at the adorable gingerhead, surprised that she was immediately used to calling him Tsukki. He was much surprised at himself, nonetheless. He never thought he liked hearing the said epithet from her.

"It will work," Tsukishima answered. "Just wait and see."

Hinata gave him a look, but she did not press any further. She concentrated on the game, giving her full trust to Tsukishima.

"Oi," Kageyama grunted.

Tsukishima looked at the raven-haired setter through the corner of his eye. Kageyama did not approve of the plan, and it was adding to Tsukishima's list of worries. Sometimes when Kageyama was against something, things get messed up like an improperly tuned guitar.

"If you insist on doing this until the game is over, you gotta do it right."

Tsukishima glanced at Kageyama in disbelief.

"J-just do your thing!" Kageyama hissed.

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"Sawamura-san, nice serve!" It was Asahi's turn to praise the captain after he flawlessly served once more.

"Here it goes again," Yaku muttered as he carefully received the ball. It went up slowly in an arc towards Kenma.

At that moment Kenma looked into Kuroo's clever cat eyes and quickly caught a hint of his many ideas. Immediately the young setter knew where to toss the ball.

Kageyama, alarmed at the opponent's plan, braced himself to block. Lev was already on his feet to spike the ball, and Kageyama together with Hinata had already jumped, their arms up to defend the floor on Karasuno's side.

But just as quickly as the oddball duo created their wall to block did Lev change his movements and allow Kuroo to spike, straight to Tsukishima, who was a little too late to aid in the defense. Nishinoya dove for the ball, but it has already bounced on the floor, giving the score to Nekoma.

**Should've expected that from someone whom I'd just pissed off**, Tsukishima thought, his face a picture of annoyance. He did not bother looking at Kuroo; he knew that the guy must be grinning from ear to ear because he managed to avenge himself so quickly.

"Don't mind it, Tsukki!" Hinata spoke to Tsukishima cheerfully. She caught the tall blonde off guard when she clapped his back, as if they were naturally close friends.

Tsukishima sneaked a glance towards Kuroo, and noticed the captain's deep frown despite scoring a point for his team.

**Eat your heart out, captain,** Tsukishima thought with a cold

smile. For a moment, he was surprised at his own wickedness. Not that he felt guilty or anything.

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Kenma was starting to feel uneasy; Kuroo may not say it aloud, but the energy he was radiating was too dark, not to mention too deadly.

"Kuroo." He spoke softly, wary that even his tone when speaking might spark the captain's anger off.

When the taller guy looked at him, Kenma thought he had seen Mephistopheles in his full glory.

"Listen," Kuroo said with a mad smile. "I have ways of taking them down. Now, are you going to help me, or not?"

Kenma looked at Kuroo for a moment, wondering if the captain had already gone nuts, but he realized that Kuroo was actually scolding him for going easy on Karasuno.

**Still calm,** Kenma thought in astonishment. _**Do you want her that much?**_

"Not if you're losing your cool, I am not." Kenma said, with a hint of stubbornness in his voice. It silenced Kuroo for a moment, after which the cool bed-haired captain gave a chuckle.

"Oh, all right." Kuroo said. "I'll try my best to keep calm and be patient." His devious cat eyes drifted until they met Hinata's wide, innocent orbs.

"They say best things come for those who waitâ€|"

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Nekoma got the next point, hence the cats made another rotation, Kenma now back at the rear guard. At this point, Kuroo faced Tsukishima directly, and it formed a strong tension inside the court.

"Looks like there's bad blood between the two of them," Bokuto muttered when he watched the two tall middle blockers fight head to head at the vanguard. "Strangeâ€|Kuroo's not the type who shows grudge against others."

"Well, the blonde crossed the line," Akaashi folded his arms across his chest as he spoke. "'Tried to flirt with Kuroo's crush."

"He did?" Bokuto was sincerely amazed. "That guy's got balls!"

"Sure, he does. Are you sure you're watching the game? How come you haven't noticed it yet?"

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**I sure as hell crossed the line,** Tsukishima thought when he heard the guys from Fukurodani Academy talk. Normally he would have avoided being in such a situation. He was not the type of guy who wouldn't mind messing with the enemy in order to win the game.

"Hey," Tsukishima muttered to Kageyama. "Participate on this."

Kageyama heard the blonde's words very well, and he could not suppress a blush. "No way in hell." He whispered, his cheeks burning red.

Tsukishima smirked at the raven-haired setter. "Your face says otherwise."

"I never agreed â€" "

"But it's working. Deal with it, King."

"Tch." Kageyama grunted. He had to admit it, nonetheless; Tsukishima riling Kuroo did a good thing for Karasuno. Nekoma's captain somehow made some errors, thanks to the way Tsukishima distracted him with Hinata.

Their whispered conversation was interrupted by Nishinoya's shouting. "Chance ball!" he yelled as he received the ball. "Kageyama!"

Kageyama was on the alert, tossing the ball to the far side of the net, in time with Hinata's jump. The gingerhead spiked the ball very well, properly pulling off a quick strike.

"Gwaaaaaaah!" Hinata had a big smile on her face.

Tsukishima nudged at Kageyama, who blushed as he stammered. "N-nice spike, Hinata."

"Eeeeh? Really?" Hinata was genuinely happy that the genius setter praised her.

"Don't make me repeat what I said, dumbass." Kageyama said angrily.

"What â€" " Hinata pouted, annoyed. "What kind of team mate would call you a dumbass after praising your spike?"

"A tsundere." Tsukishima said with a smirk.

"Right!" Hinata stuck out her tongue at the raven-haired setter.

"Tsundereyama Tobio!"

"Tsundereyama?" a vein popped on Kageyama's forehead. The rest of the team had cover their mouths to stifle their laughter.

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**What? Kageyama as well?** Kenma observed Karasuno's vanguard. The way Kenma saw it, Tsukishima and Kageyama were double-teaming Kuroo. Which was a surprising thing, knowing that the two boys never got along.

**Then again, they are protecting the same person.**

"Pfft, Tsundereyama." Lev bit his lip in order to stop laughing.

Kuroo, however, did not find it funny. Kenma could not help but worry; Kuroo was the type who would laugh at any ridiculous event before him.

"Lev," Kenma spoke to the Half-Russian. "Can you block her quicks now?"

The seriousness in the setter's tone silenced Lev. Hence the half-Russian simply nodded in reply.

"Good." Kenma said darkly. "Let's get this over with."

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The Battle At The Trash Heap has never been this intense. Neither the crows nor the cats were about to back down. Just when one team was up by one point, the other team would make a kill to tie the score. Even the spectators felt pressured; they have no idea which team was going to win.

Takeda-sensei glanced at the scoreboard and frowned. The third set was about to come to a deuce.

"This kinda reminds me of our match against Aoba Josai." He muttered.

"Yes, but something else is at stake here," answered Coach Ukai. "Or someone, rather."

Takeda smiled at the coach. "Those boys value Hinata as their team mate, don't you think?"

Ukai shrugged. "From what I've heard, they've promised Hinata's parents that they'll protect her, so I guess that's it."

"Is that so?" Takeda's eyes drifted back to the court. How he wished that the team could save Hinata.

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When Hinata did one of her broad quicks, Lev was already in the air, long arms reaching the ball and deliberately blocking the ball. The rest of Karasuno could only stare as the half-Russian took a score, giving Nekoma the lead 24-23.

"Damn it." Kageyama gritted his teeth in frustration.

Tsukishima glanced at Nekoma's side and frowned. He was very assured that his plan worked; Kuroo had committed a lot of mistakes in the third set. Unfortunately there were his other team mates " Kenma in particular " who had managed to take control of the team and used the half-Russian to deal the death blow.

"Don't mind it; let's win the next rally!" Nishinoya shouted vigorously.

Hinata was easily cheered by this. "Osu!"

Kuroo, on the other hand, was getting motivated again. "Still not giving up this set?"

"Of course not!" Hinata answered him with a determined but still adorable look. "We're going to win this!"

Kuroo gave her one of his 'innocent' smiles. "Very well."

There was a deafening silence in the court when Yamamoto served the ball.

Nishinoya received Yamamoto's serve with severe focus, automatically sending it to Kageyama. The raven-haired setter tossed it quickly to Hinata who did another one of her broad attacks. Lev, however, managed to touch the ball with the end of his fingers.

"Chance ball!" Yaku shouted, signaling the others to back away as he received the ball by himself.

"Brace yourselves for the attack!" Sawamura yelled.

"Osu!" the rest of Karasuno answered.

Kuroo spiked the ball right between the small gap in the wall of blockers before him. Nishinoya quickly came to the rescue, diving for the ball before it hit the floor. It was a clumsy receive; Kageyama had no choice but to pass it to the other side.

"Another chance ball," Kenma muttered as he watched their libero receive the ball again.

"Kenma!"

"Right," Kenma tossed the ball high. It was Lev who spiked it this time, but the ball was touched by Tsukishima.

"Nice touch, Tsukki!" Hinata shouted.

Nishinoya rolled on the floor to receive the missile-like spiked ball, and Kageyama managed to toss it more properly.

Hinata was already running around the vanguard area, and launched herself high in the air as she closed her eyes and spiked the ball.

When she opened her eyes, however, the ball landed on the floor of Karasuno.

"Eh?" she was still dazed from the quick pace of events.

"I BLOCKED IT!" Lev exclaimed. He leapt up and down, his face a genuine look of happiness. "Did you see that? I blocked cutie's super strike!"

Everyone in Karasuno was utterly in shock. The half-Russian had fully blocked the oddball duo's quick strike. But more than that, they have lost the most important game they've played in their training camp in Tokyo.

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Nekoma, on the other hand, was happy of their victory. Especially Kuroo. Now that he had won the bet, the crows had no other option than to yield their prized possession.

Kuroo held out a hand towards Hinata. He had a triumphant grin on his handsome face. There was not a trace of shrewdness in his smile, and Hinata was not sure whether she should punch him or return the smile.

"The cats won the first round," Kuroo spoke softly, as if he was consoling her. "Time for you to do your part of the dealâ€¦!"

He smirked devilishly at her, as if she was giving him her soul.

"_**Manager-chan**_."

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Yus! Chapter nine out! Yeah, I was kinda dazed and sleepy when I wrote this, so forgive me for the shitty output.

****REVIEW?****

10. Chapter 10

****Hiyaaa! I've finally found time to write this chapter after going all out during my internship.****

****00JellaNilzzZ:** Hah, the moment I wrote the Karasuno vs Nekoma part, I just knew you'll be the first to react against how I made changes in Karasuno's lineup. I have no excuses: there's no way Tsukki and Hinata would be in the vanguard together, I know one of them are replaced by Nishinoya whenever the rotation calls for it. Then again, since it was meant to be a TsukiHina moment, I wrote the anomaly anyway. ****_**Perd**__**Ã³**__**n, mi amiga**_**.****

****Xxdreamergirl95xX:** Ee, I totally agree with you. Kuroo is the epitome of hotness â€" scratch that, Kuroo is HOTNESS IN HUMAN FORM. ***coughs*** Sorry for fangirling.

****RozenSword:** Only 1 OTP sweetie, no cheating. ****_**Entiende, chica**_**?***

****Everyone Else:** AND here's chapter 10, which focuses on KuroHina (and a glimpse of some unnoticed ships worth sailing?). ******

****Oh,** and I'm kinda changing the timeline as well, extending the Tokyo Arc by adding one more day.
Gomen.**

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 10: Sherlock â€" Part 1****

Hinata heaved a sigh. She had made a bet with Nekoma's captain, Tetsurou Kuroo. And she lost to him.

She has to do as he said.

"I'm a man of my word," Hinata spoke seriously. "I'll be your manager until Karasuno wins a match against you."

"You're a â€" " Kuroo laughed sincerely for the first time that day. "A man of your word! Geez, you're way quirkier than I thought."

To anyone who really knew who Hinata was, what she said was by no means a joke.

She's not joking. She was a man after all,**** Sugawara thought pitifully. Naturally, the second and first years of Karasuno would have thought of Kuroo's naivetÃ© as something hilarious, but at that time not even Kageyama or Tsukishima, or Tanaka and Nishinoya for that matter, would even laugh.

"Very well, you're on our side now," Kuroo beckoned Hinata to gather with the rest of Nekoma. "Come over here, Manager-chan."

"Don't call me that." Hinata said exasperatedly. She did not mind ending up as Nekoma's temporary manager, but being called names was another thing.

"Fine, I'll change it," Kuroo smiled naughtily as he spoke in a low, alluring voice. "Come over here, _honey_."

Hinata grimaced at the new pet name. "No, don't call me that."

Kuroo chuckled softly. "Then Manager-chan it is."

Hinata folded her arms and harrumphed, showing dislike for the names Kuroo was giving her. Her gestures of disapproval, however, only made Kuroo's smile wider.

"We're having another practice game, Manager-chan, we need your assistance!"

"Stop calling me names!"

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"You think she'll be fine over there, senpai?" Nishinoya asked Sugawara worryingly.

Sugawara glanced at Nekoma's bench area, now in a different court, as the cats were about to face Ubugawa. Hinata was immediately up to the task of being the team manager: assisting the players, following the coach's orders, watching the game with sheer keenness. So far, the little gingerhead was doing well.

"She's safe," Sugawara spoke softly. "I think that's what matters."

He returned his gaze at the libero, who now looked unusually sullen. It was disturbing to see Nishinoya in such a state, knowing that he was naturally a cheerful person.

**I hope this wouldn't affect the gameâ€¦**|**

"Cheer up!" Sugawara spoke with as much enthusiasm as he could have. "It's just for the meantime."

"Yeah, butâ€¦|" Noya stared at Hinata, who was now handing a towel to Yamamoto, who received it shyly and gratefully at the same time.

"Hey," Sugawara smiled at him. "Just prepare yourself for the match tomorrow. If we win against Nekoma, we'll get her back."

At this, Nishinoya returned to his determined, energetic self. "Right!"

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Despite lacking experience in managing a team, Hinata was hands-on when it comes to assisting Nekoma. She was quick to give help when the members of the team needed it: whether it was Kuroo getting thirsty, or Yaku who wanted to seal Lev's mouth with packaging tape, or Yamamoto who was giddy with joy upon experiencing having a female manager at last. So far, things were going smoothly, and there was not a single problem that threatened her secret.

"Hina-chan," Inuoka Sou spoke to her while they were sitting on the bench and were watching the other members play. "Shouyou's never told us about you before."

Hinata looked at him nervously. Inuoka was one of her closest friends in Nekoma, after he competitively marked her in her first _Battle at the Trash Heap_ experience. She was Hinata Shouyou back then.

"Iâ€|wellâ€|" Hinata scratched the back of her head in an effort to come up with a proper reply. "You know my cousinâ€|_**Shouyou**_â€|he loves talking about volleyball above all things."

Inuoka grinned at her in response. "You could say thatâ€|So you play volleyball too? You and your cous' play together?"

"Yeahâ€|we play together ever since we were kids." Hinata found it hard to tell lies, but she did it anyway.

"Do you play for Karasuno's female volleyball team?"

Hinata shook her head. "I belong to the men's volleyball team."

Inuoka gave her an incredulous look. "You know what? You're a better player than a manager, I think. Why don't you join the women's volleyball team instead?"

Apparently, Hinata could not tell him that she was actually a man, hence he cannot play women's volleyball, but since she was keeping it a secret, she made another alibi. "I prefer being in a team with my cousin Shouyou. Besides, I'm more comfortable with my dude friends." She said with an honest smile; she was indeed happy to be with her teammates.

"Whoa, now," Inuoka faked a hurt tone. "Are you saying you're not happy being with us?"

His question caught Hinata off guard, and immediately she got flustered. "N-no! That's not what I meant â€" you guys are so cool, just like my teammates â€" "

She was cut off by Inuoka's laugh. Hinata arched her eyebrows at him, unable to understand why he was laughing.

"Did I say something weird?" she asked.

"No," Inuoka replied. "You just look cute when you get flustered like that."

Hinata pursed her lips as she answered, "You're weird."

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Inside the court of Nekoma, Kenma was multi-tasking.

One half of him was busy making strategic tosses to his teammates as they played. So far, everyone was doing well; having a cute female manager somewhat lifted their spirits. Kuroo was more focused now, and Yamamoto's spikes were concentrated and stronger. Even Lev was trying to make a good impression, with his basic moves slowly getting better, and his whip-like spikes more effective.

The other half of Kenma was busy observing the ginger-haired female manager who was on the bench area.

The calm and reserved setter of Nekoma could not help but notice all the similarities Shouko had with her cousin Shouyou. From the way she moves to the way she speaks, even those "Gwaaaaah" and "Bwaaaaah" that she can't help but babble whenever she sees something unexplainably amazing.

**They are so similar it's scary.**

Kenma got even more perturbed after seeing Shouko speak with Inuoka. The way Kenma saw it, Shouko also possessed Shouyou's preternatural ability to easily communicate with anyone.

**Really scary.**

"You okay?" Kuroo asked in a sincerely concerned tone.

Kenma glanced at Kuroo, surprised that the bed-haired middle blocker was finally focused enough to notice his surroundings. The recent match against Karasuno had been a test of Kuroo's wits and temper, and even Kenma almost lost his calm.

"I'm fine," Kenma answered. "I'm still baffled by why you risked losing your cool in order to get Shouko as our manager."

"Does it really disturb you that much?" Kuroo said, his tone half-annoyed, half-amused.

"Doesn't it disturb everyone?" Kenma replied, his tone irritated as well. "You totally got out of your way just to make a pass on her."

"Is that so?" Kuroo's lips curled into a devious but charming smile. "But I haven't even started yet."

Kenma frowned at his friend. Surely the front act was more than enough. Kuroo should not do any more whimsical acts to further satisfy his infatuation towards Shouko.

As if he had read his mind (which, considering how long they have been friends, is possible) Kuroo chuckled at Kenma. "Oh, please, don't tell me you're scared of whatever it is I'm about to do," he said.

"I have to be honest," Kenma replied levelly. "I'm petrified just thinking about it."

"Seriously," Kuroo grinned slyly. "There's no need for that. I'll do everything to have a close bond with her."

**You will do everything?** Kenma thought worryingly.

**Okay, this is seriously scary.**

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"That was a great game, Kuroo-san!" Hinata stood up from the bench when the players of Nekoma left the court.

"Kuroo-san?" Kuroo raised an eyebrow at the adorable gingerhead beaming sweetly at him. "Don't start with the honorifics, Manager-chan. You make me feel older."

"If that's the case," Hinata handed the captain a clean white towel. "You should stop calling me Manager-chan."

"Why, aren't you a sly one," Kuroo smiled at her.

"Seriously," Hinata said persistently. "If being called Kuroo-san makes you feel older, me being called Manager-chan feels likeâ€|" she shrugged, unable to properly describe her emotions. "Like, annoying or something."

"Is that so?" Kuroo was obviously amused by this discussion. At first he thought that Hinata wouldn't talk to him very much after Nekoma defeated Karasuno and he took away her right to play as part of the crows.

**I might get used to this,** Kuroo thought as he covered his happy face with the towel.

"So? Do we have a deal?" Hinata had a wide-eyed, hoping look on her face that Kuroo found so adorable.

Kuroo smirked at her. "Let me think about it."

Hinata pouted her lips in annoyance. "Kuroo-san!"

**So stubborn.**

"Fine," Kuroo gave in with a slight frown. "But I find Hinata Shouko

too formal."

"Shou-chan," Hinata muttered all of a sudden.

"Excuse me?"

"Shou-chan's my nickname," Hinata smiled at him. "I wouldn't mind being called that."

Kuroo looked into her wide, nut brown eyes for a minute, pondering deeply. Not only did the name Shou-chan suit her, it also sounded very cute.

**Too cute to be true,** Kuroo thought.

"Fine," he told her. Hinata grinned at him in delight.

"Yosh!" she pumped her fist in the air as she finally succeeded. "What shall I call you then?"

"What shall youâ€¦call me?" Kuroo was taken aback by the question. The cresthead actually thought about it. "Hmmâ€¦"

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There was a strange feeling surrounding the players of Karasuno. It was as if there were gray clouds gathering above their area, forming into a gloomy little storm. It was a natural phenomenon, nevertheless. Their little ball of sunshine was taken from them by Tokyo's cats.

"Why does our area feel so cold?" Yamaguchi wondered.

It was not just Yamaguchi who felt it. Coach Ukai observed his regular players carefully: he had noticed their lack of enthusiasm after they lost to Nekoma.

"This is downright horrible, Coach." It was Takeda, however, who voiced out his thoughts. "They all lookedâ€¦slightly off."

The coach hated to admit it, but it was true. Everyone seemed to be less happy about training. Kageyama became grumpier, and harder to talk to. Nishinoya became silent, and so did Tanaka. Tsukishima â€" god knows what that kid was thinking, but he seemed very bored. Even the third years, like Sugawara and Sawamura, lacked the power to lift their spirits up.

**So this is the effect of Hinata leaving the team?** Ukai could not help but wonder what will happen if Hinata's sunlight presence was there.

"Everyone, gather around!" Takeda-sensei shouted all of a sudden.

The regulars gathered around the bespectacled teacher, who folded his arms in a commanding manner which was rather unusual because â€"

well, he's Takeda-sensei.

"I know I'm not good at making strong, uplifting messages," Takeda said softly. "But I would like to say this to you: The blade of a sword will not be formed if the steel is not tempered in fire."

For a moment, the students looked at Takeda as if the teacher had spoken of a prophecy.

Takeda heaved a sigh before explaining. "What I'm trying to say is that the team will not reach its best form if you don't experience the hardship of losing. Learn from your defeat, and be twice better the next battle. Do everything you can."

He wanted to lift the team up after a hated loss, and somehow he managed to do exactly as that.

"You heard Takeda-sensei," Sawamura spoke firmly. "Let's prepare ourselves for more matches!"

"Osu!" the rest of the team shouted.

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Kenma kept on eyeing Hinata as she walked around Nekoma's bench area, doing the stuff managers normally do. He had heard her lively discussion with Kuroo, and was baffled after that.

**Even their nicknames at home?** Kenma thought suspiciously. He had known that Shouyou uses the nickname Shou-chan for a long time, although only some close friends and relatives call him that.

**Wouldn't it be confusing if they use the same nickname?**

Kenma tried to eavesdrop some more as he pretended to be resting on one end of the bench, while Hinata and Kuroo chatted on the other end. The captain and the gingerhead had been quiet for some time after trying to come up with a nickname for Kuroo.

"How about Kuro-chan?" Hinata said.

"Kuro-chan?" Kuroo was blushing, much to Kenma's utter surprise. "That soundsâ€¦affectionate."

"Huh?" Hinata had no idea what the captain was talking about. "What do you mean?"

"Kinda sounds like a pet name to me." Kuroo would never want to be called pet names in public. He found it awkward.

Hinata grinned sheepishly at Kuroo. "Then you're my pet kitty!"

And then the strangest natural phenomenon happened before Kenma's eyes. The oh-so-cool captain of Nekoma High Men's Volleyball Team, Tetsurou Kuroo, has the reddest face all of a sudden. It was as if

all of his blood went straight into the cresthead's handsome face.

It was priceless.

Kenma thought about pulling out his smartphone and taking a photo, but it was too late when he had made up his mind. Kuroo had already returned to his cool self.

"Hey, you're the one who lost," Kuroo told Hinata. "Shouldn't you be MY pet instead?"

"Nope, Kuro-chan sounds more like a pet name, so you're the pet." Hinata answered, sticking her tongue out as to end their dispute.

Kuroo mumbled something about Shou-chan sounding like a name for a pet bird like a robin or something, but he did not press the issue any further.

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"It seems like she's having a great time," Tsukishima muttered all of a sudden.

The tall blonde's remark made Kageyama turn his head towards the bench area of Nekoma, where Hinata currently was. The genius setter saw Hinata chatting with Kuroo, smiling happily as they talked about something funny "whether it was a joke or whatever, he had no idea. Kageyama found it heartwarming to see Hinata's smile, but he got irritated at the sight of Kuroo smiling at her.

"Jealous now, are we?"

Kageyama gave Tsukishima an angry look. "Shut up, Glasses."

"Calm, down, Your Majesty," Tsukishima spoke with a smug look on his face. "I didn't want this to happen, either."

Kageyama raised an eyebrow, wondering if Tsukishima did somewhat tried to fight for Hinata during the practice game against Nekoma. He himself fought with everything he had.

_**If I didn't, I'd lose Hinata right away, **_Kageyama said to himself.

Kageyama shook himself for a minute. Did he just say he did not want to lose the annoying Hinata Shouyou?

**What the hell was I thinking?**

"What do you mean, you did not want this to happen?" Kageyama asked out of curiosity. Tsukishima stared him wide-eyed for a minute, before suddenly leaving him alone.

**Weird eyeglasses-wearing jerk,** Kageyama

thought.

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During lunch break, Karasuno swarmed all around Hinata, as if she had been gone away for a decade.

"HINATA!" Nishinoya wailed, almost hugging the gingerhead but thought better of it after seeing Sugawara smiling ****_meaningfully_**** at him.

"Are you okay?!" Tanaka asked loudly. "If any of those jerks did something wrong to you, tell me! I'm gonna hurt 'em!"

Hinata simply smiled, feeling quite happy that some of her teammates actually missed her.

"How's it like to be a manager for Nekoma?" Sugawara asked inquiringly.

"It's not bad," Hinata answered. "I mean, they're just as noisy as our team members are."

"So you did not miss us then?!" Sawamura faked a hurt tone.

"EH?! It's not like that, captain!" Hinata wailed, flustered all of a sudden. "Of course, I prefer being with you guys." she smiled sweetly at everyone, and all of a sudden, the gloomy storm was replaced with bright sunshine.

Nishinoya grinned at her in return. "I'm glad to hear that!"

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Meanwhile, the members of Nekoma had gathered around their table to have lunch. Kuroo had allowed Hinata to take her seat among the crows; after all, he was someone who's in love, not a sadist.

"I never thought that having a cute female manager could lift my spirit up high!" Yamamoto almost had tears of joy in his eyes.

"I have to admit, Shouko's pretty good at doing her job," Yaku murmured.

"I'm glad you liked the incentive," Kuroo spoke with a lopsided grin. He then glanced at Kenma, whose eyes were gazing at Karasuno's table.

"What's the matter?"

"Wellâ€¦" Kenma looked at his tall bedhead of a friend and frowned.

"What ifâ€|"

There was a hesitation in his voice, as if he was about to say something ridiculous, and he knew it.

Kuroo arched his eyebrows in wonder. "What if what?"

"What if Shouko's actually Shouyou in a girl's body?" Kenma asked.

For a moment, Kuroo stared at the other boy, face frozen while taking in the question. Then the bedhead suddenly chuckled softly at him.

"Kenma," Kuroo said. "Stop playing videogames."

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****Hehe, this is part 1! So how will Kenma find out about Hinata's secret? And how the hell will Kageyama and Tsukishima understand their feelings toward our gender-bended ginger-haired beauty?**

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****Mind if you leave a suggestion?****

****Oh, and who among you guys are members of KnB World group on Facebook? Just wondering.****

11. Chapter 11

****Yo!****

****shittyboy: Yeah, you said the "Then you're my pet kitty" part twice XDD but it's okay, it simply meant that you liked that part.****

****NLockheart: How come my fic is illegal? XDD Please don't sue me. I already received a death threat from one of my reviewers, saying she'd shoot me dead if I don't finish my ficâ€|****

****Everyone Else: I think Kuroo's becoming OOC here, but my only excuse is thatâ€|wellâ€|love can change someone's personality â€" sometimes, but not all the time.****

****KenHina shippers: WHO TOLD YOU THAT I'M SINKING KENHINA? The ship has barely sailed! I told you to have faith in me, remember? *sad face*****

Dio Mio****, now I have to slightly shift the plot.****

****I had a change of plans. ****

****Here's part 2 of Kenma's investigationâ€|and more of the yandere Kuroo XDD****

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 11: Sherlock " Part 2****

Kenma knew it was a stupid idea to tell Kuroo of his assumption. But he told him anyway. And all he got was a mocking warning to stop playing videogames.

Never thought there will be a time when I'd call Kuroo an idiot,**** Kenma thought in irritation.

But it's not like Kuroo would actually agree to Kenma when he said that Hinata Shouko might be Hinata Shouyou in female form. It was not possible, anyway. Or so they thought. But there were too many similarities between the girl and her cousin that they might as well become a single person. It was the thing that bothered Kenma the most.

How can two different people be a hundred percent alike?****

Still, Kenma could not reach a conclusion without proper evidence. Only, he had no idea what kind of evidence he was looking for. Thus, despite the risk of being annihilated by Kuroo, Kenma began to spend the afternoon keeping an eye on Hinata like a scientist observing a unique specimen in the wild.

"Hina-chan?" Yamamoto called Hinata sheepishly. "Can I have water?"

"Okay," Hinata quickly grabbed a bottle of water and gave it to the Mohawk-haired spiker.

"Thanks," Yamamoto said coyly, before leaving.

Truth be told, it would be a lot easier if Kenma would directly ask Hinata if she was really Shouyou in disguise. But Kenma feared two things: one, that just like Kuroo, Hinata would only laugh at him for saying such an absurd thing, and two, that she would feel insulted and slap his face the way she would spike a volley ball. Hence he had decided to simply rely on his observations and analyze whatever data he manages to gather.

To further prove his assumptions, Kenma decided to form a little psychological experiment.

"Shouyou," Kenma called the female Hinata. He used the wrong name on purpose; he wanted to know how the girl would react.

Immediately, Hinata turned his way, eyes looking at him directly. Her gaze suddenly made Kenma feel uneasy.

Those familiar eyesâ€|****

For a moment, Hinata Shouko looked stunned, as if something shocking has unraveled before her. But she then said, "Did you just shout my cousin's name out loud?"

Kenma let out a breath he hadn't realized he had been holding. "Yeah sorry, I mistook him for you."

"Kenma, that's kinda insulting!" Haiba Lev shouted all of a sudden, surprising Hinata and irritating Kenma at the same time. "How could you mistake a beautiful girl for someone else?!"

"Lev-san!" Hinata smiled awkwardly at the lanky silver-haired boy, as if she being called beautiful was unheard of.

Then, like a wild missile fired from out of nowhere, an overpowered spike hit Lev's head, almost knocking him.

"My bad," Kuroo shouted half-heartedly. Kenma glowered at the mischievous captain.

The bedhead apologized to the half-Russian, saying his hand slipped, but Kenma doubted it; it was too damn accurate to be called a mistake. Plus, he noticed the hint of smile on Kuroo's face when he said sorry to Lev.

Putting Kuroo's childishness aside, Kenma focused on the face Hinata had made just a while ago.

It was Kenma's first evidence.

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"Oi," Yamamoto nudged Yaku while they were sitting on the bench during a time out. "Don't you notice something wrong?"

"What?" Yaku raised an eyebrow. The Mohawkhead simply pointed at Kenma, who was eyeing Nekoma's cute temporary manager intently. There was something about the intensity in Kenma's wide, innocent eyes that they found unusual.

"What do you think?" Yamamoto asked worryingly.

"What do I think? I don't see anything wrong," Yaku answered plainly.

"But there is something wrong! I think **he likes her...**" Yamamoto hissed, his eyes blinking away tears of desperation.

"Seriously, you're out of your mind..." Yaku said in irritation, although he could not help but be curious all of a sudden. Knowing Kenma, the usually quiet boy spent almost all of his free time playing videogames. No one had ever wondered if Nekoma's setter even had his own type of girl. Maybe Kenma liked cute, petite girls like Shouko? If so, then it wouldn't be that hard for him to ask her out;

her cousin Shouyou was a close friend of Kenma's, after all.

Yaku observed Kenma further, and noticed the unusual reactions that the boy made while Hinata was moving around. Kenma seemed to enjoy watching the lovely ginger-haired girl from afar. With every expression Hinata Shouko made, Kenma had a reaction. It was as if the boy found the girl's every movement a surprise.

**What's this? Unrequited love?** Yaku pitied Kenma right at that moment.

"Kenma needs help," he muttered all of a sudden, earning him a look from Yamamoto.

**Who's out of his mind now?** The mohawkhead thought in annoyance.

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"Kenma," Yaku approached the setter, who was still eyeing Hinata Shouko intently. "Do youâ€¦is there something â€¦" anything you would like to tell us?"

Kenma looked at Yaku with wide, wondering eyes then looked at Yamamoto, who was standing behind them. He suddenly came up with another plan to gather enough evidence that would prove his assumption right.

"Actually, I could use some help right nowâ€¦" Kenma spoke tentatively.

"Really? What kind of help?" Yaku sounded unusually earnest. Kenma glanced at Yamamoto once again, and the mohawkhead looked weird as well.

"Umâ€¦wellâ€¦" Kenma was unsure whether he could trust his two teammates to do the job. "I want to find out what Hinata thinks of her teammates in Karasuno."

"The guys from Karasuno?" Yaku arched his eyebrows.

_**Meaning Kageyama and the other boys around Shoukoâ€¦Wait, Kenma's sizing up his rivals? Just as expected from an intelligent boy like him. We must help him know who his opponents are, **_Yaku thought.

"We'll do our best!" Yaku spoke a little too energetically.

"We?!" Yamamoto whined, aghast.

"â€¦Are you guys sure you're okay?" Kenma could not help but ask worryingly.

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Yaku Morisuke was not a very sweet person compared to the rest of Nekoma, but he sure could be a thoughtful person sometimes. In this case, however, his thoughtfulness was totally out of place. Not to mention, the cause of it was a total misunderstanding of the situation.

"Shouko," Nekoma's libero approached Hinata. Yamamoto followed behind, looking too nervous to even speak. "Mind if we ask you a question?"

"Why did you drag me into this?" Yamamoto muttered.

"Sure. What is it?" Hinata asked amiably. Looking into her bright eyes and adorable smile, Yaku was certain that Kenma was having the challenge of his life: confessing his feelings towards this sunny little lady.

**Gotta try my best to help**

"Err " well" Yaku scratched his head shyly, not knowing where to start. "Um, what does Shouko think of the guys from Karasuno team?"

"What do I think of" Kageyama and the others, you mean?" Hinata placed a hand on her chin as she looked up, thinking about it. "Well" they're very cool people, even Coach Ukai and Takeda-sensei," She smiled at Yaku warmly. "They're noisy and wild and all that, but as teammates, they'll always be there for you. Plus, they don't give up at all. That's what I like most about them."

Judging by the way she spoke of the guys from Karasuno, Yaku was already sure that Kenma was going to have to fight hard for love.

"B-by the way, what do you like about a person the most?" he went on asking.

"What do I like about a person the most?" Hinata raised an eyebrow. "Well, I like someone who loves volleyball!"

**Too general.** "Anything else?" Yaku inquired.

"Is there anything else" Hinata thought deeply. "Hmm" She smiled at him afterwards.

"Nope. Just the love for volleyball is fine."

Yaku just had to facepalm himself in his mind. This little gingerhead was a total challenge for _**any guy**_.

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"I don't see what you liked about her," Yaku told Kenma. "I mean, if

volleyball became a human being she would've married it."

**Evidence number two, check,** Kenma said to himself triumphantly.

"What did she say about her teammates?" Kenma asked.

"Nice stuff," Yaku shrugged. "She praised their noise and persistence."

Kenma could not understand much of Yaku's remarks, but he found the information slightly useful anyway.

"So she's the type of girl who's way into sportsâ€|" the setter muttered thoughtfully.

"Oh, totally," Yaku sighed. "She probably would be happy if you go out on a date â€" to a volleyball court, that is."

At this, a smile suddenly formed on Kenma's lips as another idea came into mind. "Right."

Yaku glanced at Kenma, shocked to see such an expression on the setter's usually passive face.

**My god, he must be in love with her.**

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It took Kenma a lot of time before he was able to speak to Hinata. Actually, he was just taking his time, waiting for Kuroo to disappear before he could finally have Hinata all to himself.

"Shouko," Kenma spoke weakly. He was slightly shaking, as he was unsure of his plan. He was the type who plans, and not the one who does the dirty work.

"Yes?" Hinata asked, unaware of the boy's nervousness.

"Errâ€|" Kenma could feel his own heart ramming itself against his ribcage. "You knowâ€|I thinkâ€|I could use some help with practiceâ€|"

"You want to practice?" there was overflowing joy in Hinata's naturally cheerful tone.

"Likeâ€|real volleyball practice? You want me to assist you in practice?" Hinata's brown eyes widened; she was not used to seeing Kenma deciding to spend his energy in practicing volleyball. She could not suppress a giddy smile at him.

"I'll help you out! Wanna do it after the practice games?"

Her sweet smile ignited something warm inside of Kenma. For some reason he could not understand, Nekoma's setter could feel his cheeks

burn.

**I'm blushing?** Kenma thought in wonder. _**I don't get it.**_

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When does Kozume Kenma get peeved the most? It was when things don't go according to his plan. One good example of this would be his supposed private training session with Hinata Shouko after the practice games.

How does one know that Kenma was in a nasty mood at that time? It was pretty obvious in the way he glared at Tetsuro Kuroo, who was standing beside Hinata as they were waiting for the setter in a smaller gymnasium that evening.

"What are you doing here, Kuroo?" Kenma could no longer control the annoyance he felt.

Kuroo grinned from ear to ear, rather enjoying how he got into his childhood friend's nerves. "I'm here to help."

"How did you find out about this?"

"Uh, wellâ€¦" Hinata scratched her head and smiled. "I ran into Kuro-chan on my way here, and I told him that you needed assistance in practicing."

Kenma scowled at Kuroo, who was smiling triumphantly in return.

_**I should've asked her to keep it a secret, **_Kenma thought regretfully.

Nekoma's setter sighed. There was nothing he could do about Kuroo. The bedhead would find it out later on anyway.

"You hurt my feelings, Kenma," Kuroo feigned a sad face. "You did not ask me to help you in practicing your tossâ€¦you sought Shou-chan's assistance instead."

Kenma could totally feel the venom dripping out of every word that came out of Kuroo's mouth as he spoke in a deadly voice.

**I'm screwed. Or worse, I think I'm about to be murdered,** Kenma thought in horror.

**God, why didn't I ask her to keep it a secret in the first place?**

Kuroo, seeing how petrified his friend was, laughed joyously.

"Oh, jeez, Kenma, you're not going to war!" he said. "You're only here to train with us!"

"Kuro-chan's right!" Hinata agreed. Kenma could see Kuroo smiling

whenever she called him by his new nickname.

**That's good, Hinata, keep calling him that.**

"So," Kuroo picked up a volleyball from a nearby basket. "Let's begin."

Hinata nodded cheerfully at the captain. Kenma, on the other hand, moaned under his breath.

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At that time, Nishinoya was hiding somewhere outside the gym watching Hinata and Kuroo help Kenma in practicing his tosses. Although it was more like watching Kuroo torment Kenma while Hinata had no idea what was going on. Nishinoya could only shudder while seeing how harsh the training Kenma was undertaking. Apparently, Nekoma's captain spares no man, not even his own friend.

**Mercilessâ€¦!** Noya thought in amazement and fear.

Nishinoya was glad he came to the gym late. He was planning to practice tossing as well, seeing that the libero of one of their opponent teams had done it before in one of the games. He just happened to find Hinata, Kuroo and Kenma in the gym. He had quickly noticed the tension in the air and had decided not to intervene.

"Noya-san?"

"Gyah!" Nishinoya jolted in surprise. He quickly looked over his shoulder and saw Kageyama. The raven-haired setter had a towel over his shoulder, and was staring at the Guardian Deity in wonder.

"What are you doing there, Noya-san?" Kageyama asked.

"Ssh," Noya placed a finger on his own lips. "The devil's gonna hear usâ€¦!"

Kageyama raised an eyebrow, wondering who was the devil Nishinoya was talking about was. Karasuno's libero hugged the wall and peered into the gym stealthily, and the setter did the same.

"What's Hinata doing with those two?" Kageyama barely controlled the level of his voice.

"Ssh," Nishinoya said, "Hinata and Kuroo are training Kenma. Although torturing is the better verb."

Kageyama could very well see what his senpai meant. Kenma was on the verge of passing out, and Kuroo and Hinata were still energetically "persuading" the boy to play. Such was the deadly training pair of Hinata Shouyou and Tetsurou Kuroo.

"What are you two doing?" a voice spoke behind the two boys.

Surprisingly, Tsukishima passed by and saw Kageyama and Nishinoya peeking into the gym. The blonde middle blocker gave the two of them a derisive look, as if he had seen two monkeys performing in a circus. Kageyama glared at him.

"What are you doing here?" Kageyama asked in a hostile tone.

"I was about to go out and take a walk," Tsukishima answered coolly. "So what are you doing?"

"Why don't you two quiet down?" Noya whispered angrily. "If the cresthead catches us, we're â€" "

"You're gonna scram, or you're gonna be screwed," Kuroo finished the sentence with an air of threat. The three crows stood frozen in the corridor, staring at Nekoma's captain wide-eyed in surprise.

"Who's there, Kuro-chan?" Hinata suddenly appeared from behind Kuroo. "Eh? Noya-san?" she was surprised upon seeing Nishinoya, who smiled awkwardly at her in greeting.

"Kageyama and Tsukki? Why are you here?"

The three boys were thinking quickly of an alibi and an excuse to leave, but Kuroo did not give them time.

"They're here to practice with us," Kuroo said with a smirk.

"Really? Great!" Hinata spoke happily.

"Uh, no â€" we're actually leaving â€" " Nishinoya was about to run, but Kuroo had already grabbed the collar of his shirt and pulled him inside the gym.

"Oh, come on, don't be shy!" Kuroo said with a wicked smile. "I've seen you watching us all this time; I know you wanted to practiceâ€"|"

"Kageyama, Tsukki, you too!" Hinata added. Kageyama and Tsukishima had no choice, not when Kuroo was staring at them like a demon ready to rip out their innards, and the angelic Hinata was already pushing them into the gym.

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Kenma's scowl deepened when he saw Kageyama, Tsukishima and Nishinoya enter the gym. Kuroo had dragged more of his rivals into one hell of a training session â€" the hell word was meant to be literal.

"We can play three versus three," Hinata suggested.

"Right," Kuroo agreed.

And when the teams were arranged into groups of three, not only was

Kenma the one frowning, but Kageyama and Tsukishima as well. Kuroo had grouped himself with Hinata and Kenma, while Kageyama was grouped with Tsukishima and Nishinoya.

"We're a balanced team," Kuroo said in a satisfied tone.

"Why am I getting the feeling you're doing this on purpose?" Kenma muttered.

"No, I'm not," Kuroo answered with an innocent (but still demonic) smile. "Let's play, shall we?"

"He's obviously doing this on purpose," Tsukishima murmured.

"I swear I have a bad feeling about this," Nishinoya shuddered.

"Tell me about it," Kageyama couldn't agree more.

And they practiced till the boys were exhausted, much to Kuroo's satisfaction.

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It was an evening of torture for Kenma. He learned a lesson, at least: he learned to be careful not to cross Kuroo of all people. The cresthead could only be so subtle when it comes to settling a score with a friend.

Extremely exhausted, Kenma trod out of the gym, walking far behind Kuroo, Kageyama, Nishinoya and Tsukishima. The three boys of Karasuno were very tired as well, judging from the way they dragged themselves out of the building. Kenma doubt that Karasuno would have enough power to fight tomorrow.

"Kenma," Hinata said.

Nekoma's intelligent setter looked over his shoulder, remembering the reason why he wanted to practice in the first place. Hinata was standing behind him, her lovely face brightening up the supposedly gloomy gym with her sunny smile.

"I'm glad you asked me to help you practice," she told Kenma. "I hope we could do this again."

"Iâ€|don't think I'm in for another round after thisâ€|" Kenma answered in a weary tone. Deep inside his heart, the boy badly wanted to directly ask her the question that has been bothering him ever since the day he first saw her.

**No more beating around the bush, Kenma.**

Taking the chance once the other boys had left the gym, Kenma took up all his courage to ask that one question that had been invading his mind.

"Hinata, I'm sorry if I offend you with this question," Kenma finally said. "Who are you, really? Are you Shouyou in a girl's body?"

Kenma straightened himself, preparing to be slapped or laughed at by the girl. The reaction that came out of Hinata Shouko, however, was the last thing he had ever expected.

She was crying in front of him, all of a sudden.

"I'm sorry," Hinata said, her brown eyes flooded with tears. "I'm really, really, sorry that I lied"

For a moment, Kenma waited for the girl to say "April Fools!" or whatsoever. He thought Shouko was joking. But the girl's tearful eyes tell nothing but honest apology.

Hinata's peerless honesty. Kenma's last evidence.

__**Holy shit.**__

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WellI doubt Kenma would use swear words or anything, but who knows how he will react if he finds out that the ginger head girl who's been the apple of every guy's eye was actually a dude?

BTW please join Haikyuu! World on facebook, it's a new group meant for all the HQ! fans out there. :3

Anyway, review?

12. Chapter 12

**Yo! I guess my plot did not go exactly as I hadplotted. I put KenHina in the middle of a KuroHina arc, which distorted my concept of TsukiHina versus KuroHina, so there will be inevitable changes. But it's not like things won't get better after this. **

Now that KenHina shippers are assured that their otp hadn't sunk yet, I'm back on track.

Next-Next chapter: the long awaited crack ship OiHina versus the ever favorite KageHina.

But before that, THIS. :3

Surprise, surprise. *mischievous laugh

Douzo!

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****Chapter 12: Twenty Seconds (Part One)****

It was the probably the most eventful evening of all for Kenma. Right after his childhood friend tormented him through more than an hour of tedious training, said friend's crush confessed that she's actually a dude.

If zombies would claw their way out from underground that same night, Kenma wouldn't even blink an eye in surprise.

If anything, Kenma was rather disappointed that Hinata Shouyou had not told him of his condition right away. Not that Kenma was the type who pries into the lives of his friends. He had just hoped that the gingerhead shrimp would have been honest to him.

**Shouyou shouldn't have bothered lying to me,** Kenma thought. He could not deny it; he was slightly upset. Sure, he and Shouyou may not have bonded as long as he and the folks from Nekoma did, but they have been friends for quite a long time, and they have always been maintaining something which Kuroo had once called "long distance friendship".

**Kuroo.** Now that Hinata had told Kenma the truth, Nekoma's setter could not help but feel apprehensive.

**Just how am I supposed to tell him the truth?**

He was afraid of how Kuroo would react to the news. Knowing him, Kenma was certain that it will take time before the bedhead gets convinced.

**And if he finds out, what will he do?**

Kenma's face cast a shadow as he trod gloomily down the corridor on his way to the sleeping quarters. He was extremely worried with both of his friends.

**Both of them will only get hurt. Kuroo must learn the truth right away. Butâ€|who am I to reveal Shouyou's secret?**

His thoughts dissolved when he reached the sleeping quarters. The regulars of Nekoma shared a spacious room. There were sleeping mats already spread on the floor. A lot of the boys were still awake, either fooling around or doing their own stuff. Kenma found Kuroo standing by the window, talking with someone over the phone.

"â€|the new sets of uniform?" Kuroo asked. He was gazing outside the window, lazily toying with the hem of his pillow, which he was hugging under one arm. "You want me to go check them tomorrow?"

Kenma stood in his place, waiting for his friend to recognize his presence. Kuroo, however, had his back against him, not noticing him as he went on talking.

"No problem," Kuroo said lightheartedly. "Butâ€|I can bring someone with me, right? Like, a team memberâ€|or manager?"

Kenma could feel his heartbeat quicken its pace as a terrifying feeling crept over him.

"Okay, I'll do it," Kuroo said, before saying goodbye and ending the phone call. It was then that he had finally noticed Kenma standing behind him.

"Hey there!" Kuroo was smiling jovially. Kenma found it a bad omen.

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Although he went through hell when Kuroo had caught him and the other boys peeking outside the gym, Kageyama was unable to sleep, much to his surprise. His body was already begging him to get some rest, but his mind was in the mood for a night stroll outside the sleeping quarters before lights out. Mind won over the body in the end. He had decided to go to the restroom to wash his face even if he was done taking a bath.

He came across Hinata on his way to the lavatory.

"Oi" Kageyama did not finish his greeting upon noticing Hinata's face. The little gingerhead was a mess, although judging from the dripping water on the tips of her hair she had already cleaned herself up. Her eyes were red from crying, and her cheeks and nose were flushed as well.

The raven-haired setter's immediate reaction was to get angry. "Did Kuroo do something to you?"

"What?" Hinata was shocked at his question. "No! Kuro-chan he" he did not do anything wrong

"Then why have you been crying?" there was panic and concern in Kageyama's voice this time. The angry look on his face quickly softened into that of affection and worry which Hinata naturally was not used to seeing.

Hinata gave him a smile, assuring him that everything was all right.

"It's a long story," she said to Kageyama. "Well it isn't very long, but still let's go talk somewhere else."

Kageyama complied, and they walked outside the building together. They went to the lawn nearby the outdoor volleyball court. Kageyama gazed at his surroundings and quietly enjoyed the night scenery as he waited for Hinata to speak.

"Kenma asked me if I am Hinata Shouyou," Hinata began after taking a deep breath. "I told him the truth."

Panic welled within Kageyama right away. He stared at Hinata, who was looking upon the dark sky dreamily. She resembled a fairy, a sylph who was out to play and delight in the beauty of nature that

beautiful evening.

"W-what happened exactly?" Kageyama asked. He was unable to keep himself from stuttering. "How did he react to the news?"

Hinata looked into his eyes and shrugged, "Kenma had no reaction whatsoever. I kinda think he's had hunches about my identity long ago."

"He's a smart guy, after all" Kageyama grumbled.

"Surprisingly enough, he promised not to tell anyone," Hinata added. Kageyama gave her a puzzled look.

"Why?" Kageyama asked, his tone betraying a hint of disappointment. He had been hopeful that Kenma would tell Kuroo right away.

"I don't know," Hinata answered. "But knowing him, maybe he just didn't want to poke his nose into other people's business."

Their discussion was followed by a long moment of silence. Kageyama was having a hard time coming up with something else to say, some sort of witty remark like the ones Tsukishima usually come up with, or an encouragement like Nishinoya or Sugawara always tell everyone.

In the end, the raven-haired setter simply followed his instinct.

Instinct, however, had decided to stroke Hinata's soft sunfire of a mane of all things.

"What are you doing?" Hinata glanced at Kageyama, whose hand quickly darted away from her hair as soon as he realized what he was doing.

"N-n-n-nothing!" Kageyama blurted out while blushing. "G-g-g-go to sleep already, dumbass!"

Hinata stared at him for a moment, before making a face.

"Whatever," she said, grumbling as she walked back into the building on her own.

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Hinata woke up a little too early the other day because of hunger " she had dreamt that she was eating a giant meatbun " and she woke up with her stomach growling like a monster. Hence she went straight to the kitchen to shut the thunderous noise coming from her tummy.

But when she went to the kitchen, breakfast was not prepared yet. The female managers were the ones who do the cooking, but all of them were still in their own quarter, sound asleep. Hinata knew this because apparently she had to share a room with the ladies.

Hinata had felt better after she had finally told Kenma the truth, thus she was in a very good mood that morning. She had decided to cook breakfast for herself so that she wouldn't have to bother waking other people up. Hinata took out everything that can be used to make breakfast and cooked a meal for herself. Eggs on rice had always been a favorite of hers, as well as some fish, octopus hotdogs and other delectable stuff that her mother always made for her and for her little sister every morning.

"Oh? You're the cute manager whom Kuroo-san snatched away from Karasuno!" shouted an overenthusiastic voice.

Hinata had to look up from the bowl where she had been beating the eggs and saw silver hair, sharp eyes and a bright smile. Haiba Lev, the rookie of Nekoma, had suddenly barged into the kitchen, looking at her in amazement.

"Good morning," was all Hinata could reply.

"You're cooking? That's cool!" Lev's voice was loud enough to wake everyone. Hinata simply smiled at him and went back to her business.

Nekoma's self-proclaimed ace watched her as she went around in the kitchen, slicing, frying and so on. Hinata did not mind his presence at first, but soon she felt slightly uneasy because he seemed to be following her every move.

"Uhâ€|" Hinata glanced at him. "Is there anything you need?"

Lev grinned at her sheepishly, "Nothing. Are you cooking only for yourself?"

_**Ah. He's hungry. **_Hinata thought. She could not help but smile.

"Yes, but I think I cooked a little too much," Hinata replied amiably. "Want to share a meal?"

Lev did not even bother to hide his delight. He waited for Hinata until she had finally finished cooking breakfast. He even helped in setting up the dishes, as he was that excited to eat. Soon they were sitting at a table and having their first meal of the day.

"This tastes like HEAVEN!" Lev spoke with his mouth full, his face openly saying how much he had liked Hinata's cooking. "It's so good, I can't even â€" " he gobbled another mouthful.

Hinata smiled at him while she ate, happy that the boy appreciated the meal very well.

It only took Lev five minutes to finish his breakfast. He sighed in satisfaction as he stroked his full tummy.

"What a great way to start the day," Lev said complacently. "Those dudes from Karasuno are lucky to have you in their team! You must be making them bento and all those good food all the time."

"No, not really," Hinata replied sheepishly.

"Whaaaaat?" Lev whined in disbelief. "Those guys are missing half of their lives!"

Hinata scratched the back of her head and smiled coyly at him. She knew she can cook, but she was not used to getting compliments about it.

"Heheâ€|thanksâ€|" she blushed in embarrassment.

Lev fell silent upon seeing the shy look on her face. For a moment, Hinata wondered if she had said something wrong.

"What's the matter?" she asked worryingly.

Lev leaned forward, his face merely a few inches away from Hinata's face. The gingerhead suddenly felt uneasy.

"Are you and Kuroo-san an item or something?" Lev asked out of the blue.

"E-eh?" Hinata was clearly taken aback by the question.

"You know, if you don't like Kuroo-san, maybe I â€" " Lev no longer got to finish his sentence as a swift hand came out of nowhere and made its way to close his mouth.

"You really babble a lot every morning, Lev," Kuroo said with a friendly smile. Lev's face was a picture of horror, which Hinata (being an idiot) could not understand.

Lev thrashed about, trying to remove the scheming captain's hand away from his mouth.

"Eh? What did you say?" Kuroo's face was bright as the morning, but his tone was dark as an abyss. "You're gonna run 30 laps around the gym? That's so hardworking of you..."

Lev gave a muffled protest in reply.

"What? 50 laps?" Kuroo grinned from ear to ear. "As expected from an aspiring ace like yourself!"

"50 laps? Cool!" Hinata spoke excitedly. "I wanna be an ace too! Lev, let's go outside and run together!"

Kuroo narrowed his eyes at the lovely ginger-haired girl and smiled wryly.

"Oh no you won't, Shou-chan," Kuroo said. "We're going somewhere today."

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Around seven in the morning, the lady managers in the sleeping quarters had just woken up when they saw Hinata digging into her huge

duffel bag.

"What's wrong, Hinata?" Shimizu asked. She crawled out of her sleeping mattress and put her eyeglasses on.

"Nothing," Hinata did not even glance at the girl as she went on fumbling into her bag. "I'm justâ€¦searching for decent clothesâ€¦"

"Huh?" Yachi was puzzled, partly because she was still sleepy. She had to rub the sleep off her eyes. "What for, Hinata?"

"I'mâ€¦going outâ€¦" Hinata suddenly yelled in irritation. Soon the other girls gathered around her looking worried.

"What's wrong, Hina-chan?"

"Did you lose something important?"

"What happened?"

Hinata looked at them tearfully, "I'm going to a sports shop with Kuro-chan and I'm looking for something casual to wear but I think my mother meddled with my clothes and now I have nothing else to wear but a dressâ€¦"

"A dress?" Yachi and Shimizu were surprised. The other girls, however, squealed like there's no tomorrow.

"Hina-chan and Kuroo-san?" one of them gushed.

"Are you two on a date?" another asked. "Kyaa!"

"What? No!" Hinata's face was red as a tomato. She could not believe what she was hearing. "A date with a guy? What are you girls thinking?"

"Look, Hina-chan's blushing!"

"How cute!"

"Let us help you get prepare for your special day."

"What?" Hinata was terrified â€" scratched that, she was petrified. He stared desperately at Shimizu and Yachi for help.

"Sorry," Yachi said with an apologetic smile. "There's no stopping these girls from giving anyone a makeover."

"EH?!" Hinata was dumbstruck. Her face became as white as a clean sheet of paper in horror.

"I actually want to see how this will turn out," Shimizu murmured unhelpfully.

"S-shimizu-san, why are you saying that?!" Hinata wailed.

Hence Hinata was dragged away by the other female managers into her nightmare of being misunderstood.

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Kenma miraculously woke up earlier than the rest of the team, with the exception of Kuroo and Lev. This was very unfortunate for Kenma, because his initial plan had been to wake up very early so he could warn Hinata about the scheming captain's plan and stop her from going out with him.

Hence Nekoma's setter had to use up all his stored energy (he has a lot of energy, much to his own surprise) to jump over the sleeping bodies of all his other team members and dashed out of the sleeping quarters and ran to the room where the girls slept.

He was way too late.

By the time Kenma made it to the girl's quarters, Hinata was all prepped up to visit the sports store with Kuroo.

And, boy, wasn't she all ready to go.

Hinata looked like a wingless angel in the knee-length pure white baby doll dress (it was the dress her mother had so shrewdly put into her bag) she was wearing. Her usually wild sunfire hair was now all combed and made up, with a feather clip on one side to keep the hair away from her face.

"Oh, man, this can't be happeningâ€|" Hinata was blushing from embarrassment. Kenma stared at her from head to toe, absolutely speechless. He had forgotten his agenda all of a sudden.

"D-don't be shy, Hina-chan!" Yachi blurted out as a form of encouragement. "You look very pretty!"

"Oh, please don't say thatâ€|" Hinata hid her face in her hands in an effort to hide her shame.

"S-shouâ€|" Kenma found it hard to regain his ability to speak. "What is going on?"

"Hinata's going to a date with Kuroo-san," spoke one of the girls excitedly.

"I already told you, it's not a date!" Hinata wailed in annoyance.

__**For you, it isn't, **_Kenma thought worryingly.

"It will turn out like that anyway," added another girl.

"Tell us what happened once you return, okay?"

Hinata sighed in defeat. "I don't know what to do anymoreâ€|"

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Tsukishima was going to brush his teeth when he passed by the girls' sleeping quarters and noticed the commotion happening.

He noticed Hinata in her white dress, too. In fact, it was the very reason why he stood frozen in the corridor that morning.

Tsukishima had already known for a long time that Hinata as a girl can effortlessly become the object of affection of many young men. He had already observed it happening among his team mates, and to him they looked like victims of ebola or some other epidemic disease. If he would analyze things as if he was a doctor, Tsukishima would say that Kageyama was having a severe case of the Hinata ebola, and there was no chance of recovery for the setter. The blond had also noticed Nishinoya getting too fond of the gingerhead " but then the libero had always been too friendly to tell. Then there was Kuroo, who did not even try to hide his feelings, albeit Hinata never seem to notice. The setter Kenma " Tsukishima was uncertain of it yet, because Nekoma's setter was just too hard to read.

**But what about me?** Tsukishima had asked himself the question millions of times since Hinata Shouyou had transformed. Unfortunately, the tall middle blocker could not find an answer.

Simply put, Tsukishima was in a period of self-denial.

The tall blonde could not help but pass a hand over his forehead, simply because of confusion. There were a myriad of emotions having a nasty turf war inside his heart, and it was affecting his rational mindset.

"Tsukki?" Yamaguchi came up behind Tsukishima, worried. "You okay?"

Tsukishima looked at his friend underneath the palm of his hand. "Yeah," he said, and he quickly walked away, leaving a baffled Yamaguchi behind.

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Poor Kenma had no idea how to stop innocent (although Kenma would have used the term stupid if his friend was physically still a guy) Hinata from going out with Kuroo. It seems that there's no stopping the little gingerhead shortie from leaving the safe training camp, where her guardians (the members of Karasuno) could keep an eye on her. Although Kenma knew very well that Kuroo, despite his scheming and shrewd personality was honest and thoughtful towards the people he truly cared for, he could not help but feel apprehensive about this trip to the sports store to check on the new uniforms for Nekoma. The last thing Kenma wanted was to find his childhood friend have some feelings towards the wrong person.

_**Not that Hinata isn't worth falling in love with,
butâ€¦**|**_

"Maybe I should look for a new pair of volleyball shoes!" Hinata spoke excitedly, pulling Kenma out of his reverie while they walked together down the corridor. Kenma glanced at her and frowned. Poor Hinata, she had no idea how Kuroo feels about her, and she looks so happy going out with him for an entirely different reasonâ€¦|

All of the boys of Karasuno were already up that morning. The seniors came out of their quarters, and whatever sleepiness they had quickly faded away upon seeing their kouhai, replaced by shock and awe.

"H-hinata?" Sawamura's jaw dropped. Asahi looked dumbstruck, while Sugawara was half-surprised, as if he had already known how Hinata would look in a dress. But his silvery eyes flashed dangerously at Kenma, making the boy shudder in fear. Kenma had remembered Yamamoto say something about his dream when someone electrocuted him. He had hunches that the Mohawk-head had not been dreaming, and one of these three boys was the culprit.

Kenma had never been to a lunatic asylum before, but he felt like he was surrounded by psychopaths.

"Kenma," there was an icy edge in Sugawara's voice. "You're
**here**."

Kenma glanced away, afraid to look at the silver-haired setter in the eye.

"Sawamura-san," Hinata said. "I'm going to accompany Kuroo-san to a sports store."

Sawamura frowned at the little gingerhead. The last thing he wanted was to have Hinata out of his sight. He was her responsibility, after all. "Do you really have to? I've made a promise to your father, Hinata. Remember?"

Hinata nodded. "But it's part of my job as a manager, you see."

"You're not a permanent manager for Nekoma, Hinata." Kenma sounded insistent. Hinata raised her eyebrows at him.

"I don't see anything wrong about helping you guys out. This is my last day as your manager, after all."

Kenma frowned. Today was the last day of the training camp in Tokyo, and Karasuno was about to leave by evening. After realizing that the lovely elfin girl standing beside him was his friend Shouyou, Kenma felt a pang in the chest as he did not get to spend time with his friend.

Kenma's thoughts were interrupted when Sugawara heaved a sigh.

"Very well," Suga said. "You can go, Hinata."

At this, Hinata brightened up into a smile. "Really?"

Suga raised a finger at her as he began to speak sternly, like a mother reprimanding her daughter. "But, I want you to come back before six. Andâ€¦" he looked at Kenma tentatively this time.

"Kenma has to accompany you."

At this, Kenma's eyes widened in shock. "What?"

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**Hehe. This isn't what's supposed to happen, but anyway.
Surprise.**

Review?

13. Chapter 13

Yo!

EminaRukiAx: Hehe, Sugamama isn't exactly approving anyone, not even Kenma.

**LQAQL: Why should I rot in hell? If that happens I wouldn't be able to continue writing this ficâ€¦you wouldn't want that, no?
:')**

Empress Arisu: Haha, I hope I consistently meet your standardsâ€¦even if that means you will be flustered as to which ship shall be your OTP. XDD

TheCaptainOfShips: Why, thank you very much for falling in love with my fic! :3

Female President Cocoa-sensai: No you love me, or hate me? I don't understandâ€¦ O.o

AwesomeCocoPuff: Nee, I've messaged you! Now where's your Sugamama fic update? ^_

Lotus Sword, 00JellaNilzzZ: I really appreciate your suggestions on my grammar and writing style. I find them very handy. Thank you very much! (O/O)

**Guest: STOP READING MY FIC IF YOU HATE KUROO. IT'S AS SIMPLE AS THAT. **

Everyone else: Anyone here who is a member of Karasuno High group in Facebook?

Ah. Well. I wish you guys enjoy this.

Douzo!

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****Chapter 13: Twenty Seconds (Part Two)****

"What?"

Kenma could not believe what he was hearing, from one of Hinata's seniors of all people. Sugawara wanted him to accompany Hinata as she was about to fulfill her last duty as Nekoma's temporary female manager by going to a sports store and check on the new set of uniforms for the cats.

Kenma wouldn't have minded this had he not been scared of Kuroo, whose agenda had obviously been to have some alone time with Hinata. Kenma knew that the bed-haired captain was not going to be happy about this news.

If I agree to this, I might as well jump off a building and kill myself.****

"Butâ€¦|" Kenma could feel the beads of sweat on his forehead, cold against his skin. He was downright nervous and in panic mode. Scratch that, Kenma's about to go on nervous breakdown mode. He was certain that Kuroo was going to annihilate him.

"You're Kuroo's friend, AND Shouyou's," Sugawara spoke firmly, but not without a friendly smile on his face. "I think you are the most suitable chaperone for Shouko-chan."

"But I â€" "Kenma was about to say he has already known about Karasuno's secret, but he got interrupted by the gingerhead.

"Chaperone?" Hinata arched her eyebrows in puzzlement. "Why would I need one?"

"You need one because I said so," replied Suga. "Besides, it wouldn't hurt to have two companions to go to a sports store, right?"

Hinata nodded in agreement. "Right!" she said cheerfully. "Kenma! You, me and Kuroo, eh? This is gonna be fun!"

"Iâ€¦|don't think soâ€¦|" Kenma murmured, already imagining the horrors that he was about to experience if Kuroo finds out that he won't have Hinata all for himself that day.

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But little does Kenma know that there are other people whom he should be afraid of, aside from Kuroo.

"What did you just say?"

Hinata jumped in fear as she looked upon Kageyama's face. The first-year setter of Karasuno spoke without raising his voice, but the gingerhead could feel that the boy was totally pissed. She could not tell from his face, however, as his head was down and his face was covered by the tips of his black hair.

"Uhâ€|" Hinata was shaking in fear. She began to regret telling Kageyama about her trip to the sports store with Kuroo and Kenma. Apparently, Kageyama was against the idea.

**It's not like I needed this guy's permission, anywayâ€|** she said to herself.

"Why do you have to go?" Kageyama looked at her face and scowled. Hinata looked straight into his dark orbs â€" _**did he just whine?**_ She wondered, for she had never heard Kageyama whine before. It somehow made him look like a kid, and although she could not admit it â€" well, she could, but she did not want to razz Kageyama, of course â€" she found this behavior cute.

"Uh, well â€" Kuro-chan, he â€" " Hinata was about to explain, but she paused when she noticed Kageyama's sour expression.

"Kuroo?" Kageyama's eyebrows furrowed in annoyance. "Why in the world can't you say no to that guy?" He did not use an honorific, despite the fact that Kuroo was two years his senior.

**He's obviously jealous,** Kenma thought analytically as he watched the oddball duo bicker furiously like a married couple. It made him feel uneasy being around with them. Kenma's instincts told himself that he should run for the hills while it was safe, but he just could not leave Hinata alone with an irate Kageyama. It was like leaving a poor little fledgling inside the mouth of a furious lion. Although for an senpai who wanted to keep a kouhai safe, Kenma was doing little to save Hinata's hide.

"Kuro-chan only needs my help. Why do you make it such a big deal?" Hinata raised her voice as she argued with the raven-haired setter.

"It's your fault, dumbass!" Kageyama replied, his tone angrier than ever. "You have no idea what that bedhead wants from you!"

"What would Kuro-chan want from me?" Hinata was puzzled. Kageyama glared at her, further irritated at her naÃ¯vetÃ©.

"You're a total idiotâ€|" Kageyama grumbled, and he stormed off.

Kenma watched the raven-haired setter leave, and glanced at Hinata afterwards. He could see that she was shaking, but this time it was due to frustration. Her hands firmly on her sides, he also noticed her fair hands balled into fists as she kept herself from having a fit.

**And Shouyou is fighting the urge to cryâ€|**

"Hina â€" " Kenma was about to console the girl, but he paused at the arrival of Tsukishima, who looked amusedly surprised upon seeing Kageyama literally stomping away like an annoyed giant.

"What's the matter with the King?" the tall blonde asked Hinata, ignoring Kenma on purpose.

"Kageyama's acting like a dictator today, and I don't know why!" Hinata answered, before looking at Tsukishima in surprise. She never expected herself to confide her emotions to the taller middle blocker, of all people.

Tsukishima simply shrugged at her in response. "There's nothing surprising about that, is there?" he said, then he approached the gingerhead. "I've heard from the seniors. You're going somewhere?"

Hinata felt uneasy about the way she and Tsukishima talked at that moment. They never had a conversation as casual as this one before. But more than that, she felt unused to the close space between her and the blonde. Sure, they were teammates; hence they were used to being nearby each other. But standing close to each other outside the volleyball court was a whole different matter.

It took Hinata a while before she could answer his question. "Y-yeah! I'm going to the sports store with Kuro-chan and Kenma."

Hinata had to crane her neck up because of Tsukishima's height. She looked upon his brown eyes, wondering why Tsukishima, a person who barely wanted her around, now stood close in front of her. She jerked in surprise when she felt his hand grab her wrist "gently, unexpectedly gently" and placed something on her palm.

Hinata looked down at the object in her palm, baffled. In her hand was a taser, exactly the one Sugawara had used on Yamamoto the night he saw her and Tsukishima together in the hallway while they were running away from Kuroo.

"You'll need this," Tsukishima said vaguely. Hinata gave him an odd look. "They say it's better to be safe than sorry, anyway."

"H-how did you get this?" Hinata asked. She would have also wanted to know why he had given her Sugawara's taser, but something tells her that he wouldn't give an answer to that question.

Tsukishima gave her that rare, mysterious smile she had first seen in him during their practice game against Nekoma.

"I have my ways," Tsukishima smugly spoke in a whisper. He quickly walked away, leaving Hinata and Kenma with bewildered expressions on their faces.

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"Kenma! It's time to go."

Kenma shuddered upon hearing Kuroo shout at the corridor. There was something cold in the scheming captain's voice, like clouds gathering

to form a storm. Kenma quickly put on a hoodie over a printed shirt and a pair of cargo pants, and rushed to the hallway to meet up with Hinata and Kuroo. Hinata had a thin cardigan over her dress (it made Kenma wonder where she had hidden the taser Tsukishima gave her moments ago), while Kuroo a black jacket over a white shirt and straight cut jeans.

Kenma glanced at his two companions. Hinata looked as lovely as the sun on a bright day, but Kuroo " Kenma had to admit the captain looked good in his effortless urban attire, but Kuroo had an unreadable expression on his face. A bad sign, Kenma assumed right away.

"Kenma!" Hinata promptly jumped in front of Kenma, startling the boy. "This is like a field trip! It's gonna be fun, don't you think?"

Kenma flushed, feeling uneasy at Hinata's proximity to him. He quickly glanced away from her. "Yeah"

"Let's go." Kuroo turned on his heel briskly and walked away. Hinata and Kenma followed him.

"Oi! Wait for me!"

The three of them stopped on their way to the front door. Nishinoya was running towards them, wearing casual clothes. The sight of him made Hinata smile, Kenma freeze in shock, and Kuroo frown in irritation.

"Wait for me! I'm coming with you!"

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Kuroo could not believe how unlucky he was that day. When he had been informed that Kenma was accompanying him and Hinata " as ordered by Karasuno's seniors, something even he could not defy " he was somehow disappointed at first, but he did not mind because Kenma was his friend. But now there was the pesky libero of Karasuno, Nishinoya Yuu, joining the party.

Kuroo had wanted a date with Hinata, but now he felt like he was a babysitter taking a trio of toddlers on a field trip.

"I" Kuroo glanced at Nishinoya warily while they were walking to the train station. "I want to ask why have you decided to join us in our little shopping spree, Nishinoya?"

"Eh?" Nishinoya gave the scheming captain an innocent look, and shrugged. "My volleyball shoes are ruined, so I have to buy a new pair."

Kenma, who was walking behind eyed the Guardian Deity suspiciously. He had remembered seeing Nishinoya's shoes yesterday, and they were as good as new.

"Well, isn't it a **_**coincidence**_**." Kuroo narrowed his eyes at Karasuno's hyperactive libero. He was about to say something else afterwards, but for a moment something caught his attention as they passed by some shops, and he had to look over his shoulders at Hinata. "Shou-chan, don't go wandering about; you'll get lost."

"Huh?" Hinata sounded absentminded. She was stooping over a rack of items displayed in a souvenir shop, obviously caught red-handed checking on the cute animal key chains.

Kuroo's face softened when he stared at her. "We can go check that stuff out later on, Shou-chan. We've got work to do."

"Okay." Hinata obediently followed Kuroo as he and the others went inside the station.

The train ride had been swift, although the group somehow disturbed the other passengers with Hinata and Nishinoya gawping at everything they see. It had been a smooth yet uneventful ride, with Kenma observing his companions: Hinata happily enjoying the view outside the train with Noya, and Kuroo lazily eyeing them both like a bodyguard on a graveyard shift.

So far, so good,**** Kenma said to himself, and he had to sigh in relief.

"Is that Tokyo Tower?" Nishinoya asked, pointing a finger outside the window.

"No," Kuroo answered irritably. "Do you have to ask me that question every time we pass by a steel tower?"

Hinata, on the other hand, could not suppress a giggle. Kenma stole a sidelong look at her, unable to help but notice how the little gingerhead's behavior seems to fit her current gender. It made Kenma wonder if it was the reason why it took him a while before knowing that she was in fact Hinata Shouyou. All he could see was a charming, elfin girl with a bright smile and a cheerful, positive demeanor.

No wonder guys are so fond of her, ****Kenma thought â€" unhappily, for some reason even he could not figure out.

As far as Hinata was concerned, Kenma believed that the gingerhead was safe from Kuroo's advances, especially now that Nishinoya was with them. Kenma wondered if Sugawara had sent the Guardian Deity to tag along with them. Part of Kenma felt relieved that Karasuno's libero was with them, but another part of him was disappointed that Karasuno's seniors did not trust him very much.

Then, there was also another part of him saying that their trip to the store was about to become a riot.

Kenma hates riots, unfortunately.

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"Gwaaaaah!"

As expected from Hinata and Nishinoya, the two short-legged volleyball players were downright amazed when they entered the sports store. It has two floors, with racks of items ranging from training shoes to jerseys and other sort of gear.

"Hey, Hinata!" Nishinoya pointed a finger at an entire rack of volleyball gear displayed against one wall.

"Ooooh!" Hinata's cheeks flushed with excitement upon seeing the rows of volleyball shoes in different colors and sizes. "Cool!"

The two little crows quickly dashed to check the volleyball shoes out, while Kuroo and Kenma stood behind them watching.

Kuroo folded his arms across his chest as he eyed the little gingerhead fondly. "There'll be less boring dates if all girls are **that** enthusiastic when it comes to shopping for sports goods."

But Shouyou is a boy, Kenma wanted to answer, but he did not voice out his thought.

"You speak as if you have a lot of experience when it comes to dating." Kenma sat on a low bench as he took out his smartphone.

"How come you sounded so cynical when you said that?" A vein pulsed on Kuroo's forehead, although he maintained a lighthearted smirk at his friend.

"Aren't you supposed to check the new sets of uniforms?" Kenma asked, changing the topic all of a sudden. He had known his childhood friend long enough to understand that he had hit on a sensitive topic.

"Right." Kuroo turned around to find the nearest saleslady. "I'll be back in a minute. Keep an eye on Shou-chan and the short guy; who knows what wildness they're up toâ€|"

Kenma glanced at where Hinata and Nishinoya were. The two looked so amazed while roaming around that they seemed like children who had entered a candy store. It made Kenma worry all of a sudden; he began to hope that nothing would get destroyed or broken by the little crows' lack of control.

You don't have to remind me, Kenma said to himself as he walked to where Hinata and Nishinoya were.

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"There's so many to choose from, I don't know which I should pickâ€|" Hinata whined in confusion as she gazed at the rows of volleyball

shoes in front of her.

"Pick the most comfortable ones," Noya suggested to her. He would not admit it, but he was also confused at which shoes to buy.

Hinata pouted her lips in frustration. "My old ones are still good to wear, but ever since I changed into a girl my volleyball shoes became too big for me. And I don't know my shoes size anymoreâ€|"

Noya glanced at her in concern. He could only imagine how hard it has been for Hinata to muddle through her transformation. And he, the proprietor of it all, could not do anything to lessen her burden.

**Buckle up,** Nishinoya said to himself. _**Be the great senpai that you are, Noya!**_

He grinned at her from ear to ear and said, "Let your senpai pick a good pair of shoes for you!"

"Eeeeh? Really?" Hinata's face brightened up in delight. "Butâ€|aren't you going to buy volleyball shoes yourself?"

"Nah, I can buy for myself later. Look, there are some cool-looking shoes over there."

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When Kenma approached Hinata and Nishinoya, the two were already picking some volleyball shoes.

"Hinata, look." Nishinoya pointed at a pair of white volleyball shoes. "Try these."

"I hope that's not too expensive â€" " Hinata said worryingly, but the libero was already pushing her to sit on a chair to try the shoes on. "Noya-san, wait a minute â€" "

"Nah, don't mind the price!" Nishinoya knelt in front of her as he removed her slippers.

**What's this?** Kenma thought in disbelief while watching the scene before him. _**Cinderella?**_

"Here, let me help you." Nishinoya carefully slipped Hinata's feet into the volleyball shoes, and then he tied the shoelaces one after the other.

"Noya-san, I can do it by myselfâ€|" Hinata looked down at the libero's face as she watched him work on the shoes.

"There you go." Nishinoya stood up once he was done with his work. "How do you like 'em?"

Hinata looked at the shoes. They fit her feet comfortably, much to her surprise. She stood up to test them. "They'reâ€|nice."

"Really? Hah!" Nishinoya smiled a proud and giddy smile. "I luckily guessed your shoes size!"

"How about you," Kenma broke in all of a sudden. "Didn't you say your shoes are ruined?"

"Yeahâ€¦rightâ€¦" Nishinoya muttered. Kenma eyed him impassively, though he was observing his gestures. It didn't take Kenma long to find out that his suspicion was correct.

"Let me help you pick your shoes too, Noya-senpai!" Hinata was eager to return a favor from Noya.

"Eh?" Noya felt his cheeks glow red and his heart skip a beat. His name, when followed by the term 'senpai', had that effect on him. "N-no! You d-don't have to, Hinata!" he gave a nervous laugh as he scratched the back of his head sheepishly. Both Hinata and Kenma gave him a puzzled look.

"Kenma!"

Kenma looked over his shoulder at Kuroo. The bed-haired captain had two huge paper bags, heavy with his purchase. "You might as well help me out, you know."

Kenma pouted in reluctance, but he complied anyway. There was no point in annoying the scheming captain.

Kuroo stared at Hinata and Nishinoya. "You gonna buy something?"

Hinata nodded in response, while Nishinoya answered, "I can't find anything to my liking."

"Oh. How unfortunate is that." There was cold sharpness in Kuroo's voice as he handed Kenma one of the paper bags. "Maybe we should go check the other stores?"

"Nah, it's okay," Nishinoya quickly replied. "It's our last day here in Tokyo anyway. I think I'll just buy a new pair when we get back home."

The scheming captain eyed the Guardian Deity smugly for a minute, before turning towards the counter where the cashier stood.

"If you say so."

After purchasing the new sets of uniform, as well as a pair of new shoes for Hinata, the group had decided to go home.

"It would have been fun if we can take you guys on a tour, but we can't just carry these around." Kuroo indicated the paper bags they have been carrying after shopping in the sports store. "I wouldn't mind taking these uniforms along with me, but Kenma on the other hand, will probably faint."

Kenma glared at Kuroo, unhappy about the slight insult aimed at him.

"It's okay," Hinata replied. She was walking ahead of the boys, skipping cheerfully while carrying her purchase. "There's still next time, right?" she looked over her shoulders and smiled at them.

"Oi, Hinata," Nishinoya said worryingly. "Watch where you're going
â€" "

Just as Karasuno's libero had warned Hinata to look ahead of her, Hinata ran into someone huge and bulkyâ€|and downright pissed. It was a tall, middle-aged man with a blond-dyed pompadour of a hair and an unpleasant face worsened by his angry expression. He looked down at Hinata with a nasty glare.

"The heck aren't you watching your step, kid?!" the man drawled. Hinata looked upon him with wide eyes, her entire body frozen and shaking in fear.

**Crap, he must be a gangster,** Kenma thought in horror.

"I-I-I'm sorry â€" " Hinata stammered. She was totally frightened at that time.

"Huuuh?!" The man raised a hand. "You littleâ€|"

"Oi! Don't you dare touch Hinata â€" " Nishinoya was ready to lunge at the man.

The events that followed all happened in a flash. The last thing Hinata, Kuroo and Nishinoya remembered, there was a flash of movement, and they saw a spark, and heard the man let out a strangled scream. Then a group of six to ten men came, all of them looking like bad guys from action movies with their faces and muscles and saw what happened to their companion.

Kenma dropped the taser, and grabbed Hinata by the arm.

"What â€" " Hinata was too astonished to quickly understand what had happened.

"Let's go," Kenma muttered to Hinata, tugging her by the arm as he began to drag her away from trouble.

"Oh, shit!" Nishinoya was downright terrified as he saw the big guys run towards them.

"This must be my unlucky day, damnit!" Kuroo grunted as he turned around.

That's when the four of them ran for their lives.

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**Ooh, I didn't mean to end this with a cliffhanger!
:3**

Review?

14. Chapter 14

****Yo-ho!****

****Blubber:** Are you a NoyaHina shipper? Thanks for reviewing btw.**

****AnimeLoverMars:** Daijoubu desu yo! So long as you give a review, I will always appreciate it!**

****AwesomeCocoPuff:** No, it's not in the bra. Even cardigans can have secret pockets (mine has one, for some reason).**

****mikohoshina:** This isn't exactly what you would call an encounter with KnB characters, butâ€¦**

****Guests:** Thank you!**

****Everyone Else:** I'm planning to make a fem!Suga reverse harem, and I'm actually plotting (yeah, like an EVIL PLOT, hohoâ€¦|kidding :P) the storyline right now. I'm planning on a fantasy/romance, but knowing myself, this might end up with humor as usual. XD**

****And tbh I never intended to make the "Twenty Seconds" episode a three-part chapter, but the events of the date had exceeded 3,500 words (much to my surprise), so I had to, anyway.****

****Oh, and mainstream they may be, I'm also writing the first chapter of "The Boyfriend from Hell", a Tsukki x fem!Yama fanfic. I'll publish it sometime this Christmas.****

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 14: Twenty Seconds (Part Three)****

"What's the matter, Tsundereyama? You look so gloomy today."

This question was apparently not asked out of concern. No way would Tsukishima ever do that, not to Kageyama Tobio of all people. That morning practice, the tall middle blocker of Karasuno was in the mood to razz the already hot-headed setter. Everyone in the gym had been witnesses to that.

Obviously, Tsukishima's name-calling earned him a threatening look from Kageyama.

"Huh?!" the raven-haired setter was utterly pissed off, much to the blonde's satisfaction. "You bastardâ€¦|" Kageyama clenched his fists in anger. "Don't call me that."

"Eh?" Tsukishima's eyes feigned innocence, not that he was planning to hide his ulterior motive, which was to annoy the other boy. "But

Hinata gave you that nickname. I thought you like it," He spoke in a singsong voice. His lips curved into a mischievous smile afterwards. "Or do you prefer the title 'King'? Oh, I get it. Of course you'd rather be called 'King'. 'King' sounds better, don't you think? It clearly defines your form of dictatorship, am I right, 'King'?"

"You bastard!" Kageyama had had enough of the taller boy's wisecracks. He was about to lunge at Tsukishima, one fist raised to land a blow on the face. Thankfully Tanaka and Ennoshita had decided to interfere.

"Kageyama, Tsukishima don't fight!" Ennoshita held Kageyama back, not without effort.

"Oi! Stop it!" Tanaka yelled as he stood between his two kouhais. "You're gonna make Daichi-san mad! Don't you idiots ever learn?!"

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Sawamura, however, was less angry than worried. He was concerned about the condition of the entire team. The way the captain saw the situation, there were changes in Kageyama and Tsukishima's behavior whenever Hinata was not around. Kageyama becomes too grumpy (even for himself) and Tsukishima begins to hack him off, as if provoking the young setter suddenly became his favorite past time.

Moreover, he was worried about Hinata's safety in Nekoma's hands. It wasn't that Sawamura thinks that Kuroo was up to something nasty, but as far as the scheming captain knows, Hinata Shouyou was Hinata Shouko, and "Sawamura had to admit it himself" Hinata Shouko was a very attractive girl.

"Hinata needs to return soon, or this gym's going to be a pandemonium," he murmured as he sat down on the bench during break time. "I wonder how she's doing outside!"

"Calm down, Daichi. I had Nishinoya tag along with them," Suga spoke from behind Sawamura, snapping him out of his thoughts. "Hinata's going to be fine."

"You ordered Nishinoya to follow them to the sports store?" Sawamura said in disbelief. "How come I haven't been informed about this beforehand?"

Sugawara smiled, but he spoke in an apologetic tone. "It was a late-minute idea. Sorry."

Sawamura frowned at him. "I can't believe you just did that." He was somehow disappointed that Suga did not even tell him of his plan.

"I'm really sorry, Daichi. But I'm worried about Hinata, too." Sugawara's face became grim, something Sawamura found very disturbing.

"But Suga, you've been acting strange these days. You've becomeâ€¦"

"Crazy?" Sugawara quipped. Sawamura had to swallow hard, as he hoped that whatever he answers in response won't anger the other.

"I was going to say overprotective, but yeahâ€¦" Sawamura stared at the silver-haired boy worryingly. Indeed, Suga himself has been behaving oddly after Hinata's transformation, and it wasn't exactly what you would call a change for the better.

The captain's anxiousness went a notch higher when Suga smiled darkly at him.

"Maybe I am," Sugawara said. "Maybe I am the crazy, overprotective type. But that isn't a dangerous thing, is it?"

Despite the taser and the torture and all the action-packed shenanigans he has committed, Sugawara still thinks he wasn't dangerous. At all. Which was crazy.

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Adrenaline rush. That's how Kenma was faring right now.

Nekoma's smart young setter could not believe what he was doing that moment, either. Everything had happened in a blur, akin to those scenes he had often seen in videogames. One moment he had electrocuted a man who was probably twice his size using the taser Hinata had in her â€" how he had managed to find it, albeit **use** it, Kenma had forgotten â€" the next thing he remembered, he was already running with Hinata, Kuroo and Nishinoya, and there was an army of gangsters right at their heels.

"Hurry, Kenma!" Hinata was the one dragging Kenma this time. Apparently the little gingerhead was way more athletic than him, hence she can run faster than him even if she was only wearing slippers.

Kenma was trying his best to keep up, but his legs were already about to betray him. Kuroo glanced at him anxiously, before shouting over to Hinata.

"Hinata! You know how to get back to the gym, right?" he asked.

Hinata nodded. "Yeah," she answered in between heavy breaths while running. "I think I can manage to get to the station, at least."

The group had reached an intersection, which was teeming with pedestrians much to their fortune. The bad guys had trouble catching up with them due to the huge crowd of people walking in the streets.

"Take Kenma with you. We'll part ways so they won't be able to catch us together." Kuroo glanced at Nishinoya. "You. Help me lure those

bastards away." He took a quick turn to the right. Nishinoya groaned in annoyance, hating the idea, though he had no choice but to follow bedhead.

"Take care!" Hinata shouted, and she ran with Kenma to the left, to the direction of the nearest train station.

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Despite the whirlwind of events that took over their lives on such short notice, Nishinoya could not help but observe a few little things while he was unfortunately running along with Kuroo. For one, the libero had realized that despite the clever-mindedness of the bed-haired middle blocker, he had not taken the opportunity to take Hinata with him. Nishinoya had actually been wary of Kuroo's probable plans to get rid of him and Kenma during their trip to the sports store, but when they had to get away from the bad guys who were chasing them around Kuroo had decided to let Hinata go home with Kenma.

"You must be wondering," Kuroo suddenly spoke, in between heavy breaths while they were running down a street lined with small shops, "why on earth I hadn't taken the chance to run away with her."

Nishinoya had to glance at him, clearly taken aback. "How did you â€"

"It's quite obvious in your face." Kuroo leered at the smaller boy. "You've been staring at me long enough to make me feel awkward."

"A-awkward?" Nishinoya said with an alarmed look on his face. _**Had I been staring at him that long?*_

"Calm down, I don't mean to imply anything." Kuroo could not help but chuckle upon seeing the other boy's reaction. He ran in a slower pace, allowing Nishinoya to keep up with him. "At this point, I just think it's better to let Kenma take Shouko back to the camp."

The expression on Kuroo's face told Noya how much the bedhead trusted his friend. "You think they'll be all right?"

At this, Kuroo answered him with an honest smile. "I think you've seen how fast Kenma came to Shouko's rescue a while ago." He then skidded into a halt, horror written all over his face, though he tried to sound calm. "Damn."

"What?" Noya followed the other boy's line of sight; ahead of them were a number of men walking towards them.

Kuroo seemed to have a smirk on his face, although in reality he was gritting his teeth in annoyance. "They've separated themselves as well, to corner us. Clever."

Nishinoya looked over his shoulder and saw another group of men not

far behind them. The image of Hinata suddenly entered his mind, and he began to worry for her safety.

"I can fight, but we're obviously outnumbered here!" For the first time, Noya heard a hint of doubt in Kuroo's voice.

"Huh?! What are you saying?" Noya grunted. "If we're gonna go down, we go down fighting!"

"So stubborn!" Kuroo muttered in annoyance. Nonetheless he wished he had the same guts as Nishinoya's at that moment.

"HUH?! Whatd'ya say, kid?" one of the thugs spoke haughtily, followed by a chorus of laughter by the rest of the gang. Kuroo glanced about; he was partially pissed at the fact that despite the number of people starting to notice the commotion going on, no one seemed to be sympathetic enough to call the police.

"Now, don't laugh at the guy. He's probably older than you are," Kuroo smirked at the bad guys. "Character-wise, that is."

"You bastard!" said gangster was about to charge towards the two boys and stepped on something, which made a loud, crunchy noise. Everyone fell silent, and nobody moved a muscle until all eyes went down to the object: it was an elongated object wrapped in colorful package.

"A Maiubo?" Kuroo raised an eyebrow in wonder.

"Maiubo?" Noya glanced at the taller boy, equally puzzled.

At that exact moment, they felt the presence of someone huge standing behind them. Nishinoya turned around... then craned his neck up very high, as he stared at a guy standing almost seven feet tall and was wearing a purple jersey jacket. Beside him were guys who were less taller than him, but were nonetheless six-footers at the very least.

"W-w-what the hell!" Nishinoya was totally dumbstruck.

"Are you sure you dropped it here?" spoke one of the tall guy's companions, a handsome young man with sleek black hair and a beauty mark underneath one eye.

"Himuro, why don't you just tell Murasakibara to buy another maiubo?" said this time by a big guy who reminded Noya of a gorilla.

Murasakibara, the almost seven-footer guy shook his shoulder-length purple hair defiantly. "That maiubo was a rare flavor."

"Maiubo?" Kuroo's ears perked up, as an idea suddenly occurred into his mind. He then turned to the seven-footer guy. "Hey! are you talking about the thing that guy's been stepping on?" he pointed a finger at the goon who had stepped on the maiubo on the ground.

"Huh?!" the gangster was startled when the scheming captain pointed him.

"He says he dislikes sweets, so he crushed your maiubo!" Kuroo added, with an accusing glare at the poor gangster.

Murasakibara eyed the crushed snack on the ground, before glaring at the gangsters dangerously. "My maiubo!"

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Kenma was a very intelligent volleyball player, but he was not athletic at all. And it was a very unfortunate thing, as he and Hinata were on their way back to the camp, running for their lives while being chased by a group of brutes. He could barely keep up with Hinata, whose natural speed and superb stamina had kept her running non-stop, despite wearing slippers and carrying the paper bags filled with the items they've bought in the sports store.

"Hurry up, Kenma!" Hinata shouted.

"I can't " go on " " Kenma was panting while running behind her. Fatigue was gradually slowing him down, not that he had been running very fast.

"You have to go on, or we're dead!" It wasn't hard to tell that Hinata was already panicking. Kenma could not blame her at all. The innocent gingerhead must have not encountered city thugs before. "We're not that far from the train station!"

"Just go ahead, Shouyou!" Kenma could no longer take it. He was too tired to move his legs any further. But he did not want Hinata to get caught by the gangsters, especially not while everyone seemed to have entrusted her to him, even Kuroo and Sugawara. He wanted to keep her safe.

Hinata, naturally, wanted to do the same thing. She took Kenma's paper bag, before settling herself on one knee, her back facing him. "I'll carry you, Kenma."

Kenma gave her a look of disbelief. He was definitely against the idea. "No way."

Hinata looked over her shoulder at him. "Hurry up," she said insistently. "I can carry you until we get to the station."

**She's serious,** Kenma thought incredulously. Of course, this grand gesture was pretty much expected from Hinata Shouyou, humankind's best friend. But Kenma, no matter how weak he looked, still has his own pride to maintain.

Hinata seemed to understand this, nonetheless. "If you're embarrassed, just put on your hood." She smiled at him persuasively. "You saved me from that bad guy a while ago. I won't just leave you behind."

Kenma had already expected Shouyou to be this kind, but he could not keep his cheeks from coloring anyway. He hastily placed the hood of his jacket over his head to hide himself, finally giving in. Hinata

grinned as he allowed her to carry him, piggy-back style.

"Let's GO!" Hinata, born with a tremendous amount of energy that scientists should take notice of, ran to the train station.

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"I don't know what happened there, but thanks for saving us." Kuroo still could not believe he was still alive after the encounter with the gangsters. It was simply by a twist of fate that he and Nishinoya were saved by a seven-foot-giant and his companions from the basketball team. Apparently the angry Murasakibara was more than enough to drive the goons away.

Himuro smiled complacently at the scheming captain in response. "No, we haven't done anything, really."

Nishinoya, on the other hand, was still in awe upon seeing the super tall purple-haired dude named Murasakibara Atsushi. He had never thought he would encounter a person who was so blessed in the height department.

Likewise, Murasakibara was shocked to see a small guy like Noya. "Eh? What do those guys want from a gradeschooler?"

"What did you say?!" networks of veins pulsed all over Nishinoya's face. "I'm a second year high school student!"

"Second-year?" Himuro chuckled softly. "Atsushi, he's your senpai then."

"Senpai?" Kuroo and Nishinoya's eyes widened in shock.

"That giant's a first-year?!" Nishinoya asked, pointing upwards at the face of Murasakibara, who did not seem amused at the gesture.

"Don't point a finger at me." The purple haired giant pouted his lips childishly as he threatened the smaller guy. "Or I'll crush you."

"As I had said, he's your senior, Atsushi." Himuro lightly scolded his team mate, before facing Kuroo. "Sorry, but we have to take the Shinkansen right away. We have to go."

"No problem," Kuroo answered. "Thanks again."

The big guys bid farewell to the two boys, and went on their way. Kuroo heaved a sigh of relief, but Noya began to look worried again.

"I hope Hinata's safe," Nishinoya said.

"I already told you, they'll be fine," Kuroo said, but he took out his phone and texted Kenma anyway. "Who knows? Maybe Kenma's taken

her to an arcade shop or something."

"I hope you're right." Nishinoya still couldn't help but worry.

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Kenma was very impressed to the point that he believed he and Hinata could win a derby race if they were given the chance to join (even Kenma was shocked at himself for thinking of such an idea "can Shouyou really win against a racehorse?). The elfin gingerhead, despite all the baggage she had, managed to run all the way to the nearest train station. Obviously, a cute girl carrying a teenage boy on her back while running through the multitude of city pedestrians got the attention of many people. Kenma could not help but be embarrassed despite the hood that covered his face as well as his shame. He even heard a pair of male high school students who were riding a shigaraki cart and were stuck in traffic talk about them.

"A cute little girl carrying a dude!" shouted the first boy, a happy-go-lucky looking guy with black hair and sharp silvery-gray eyes. "Shin-chan, you seen that?"

The other student, a tall boy with green hair and wore a pair of eyeglasses, spoke in a stern voice. "The light's turned green, Takao. Why don't you stop noticing people doing stupid things?"

**People doing stupid things,** Kenma said to himself, somehow agreeing with the eyeglasses-donning guy. He heard the dark-haired guy spoke loudly as they went off.

"They must be one of those guys who play in reality shows!"

"Takao, shut up."

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The rush hour was just starting when Kenma and Hinata got to ride a train. Knowing that she was probably tired after all the running they've done, Kenma forced Hinata to sit down, while he stood not far from her, just holding on to the handlebar beside the door.

"I got a message from Kuroo," said Kenma.

"Are they okay?" Hinata asked anxiously.

Kenma did not respond for a moment while he read the text.

[17:45] Shorty and I are alive. Are you and Hinata ok?

Kenma let out a breath he hadn't realized he'd been holding. "They're

fine." He began to compose a message reply.

Hinata sighed in relief as well. "Thank goodness."

"I can't believe we actually ran into some gangsters," Kenma said once he was done messaging Kuroo. "I did think I was going to have a bad day, but I did not expect to be chased off by some city bad guys."

"Why did you think you were about to have a bad day?" Hinata asked curiously.

Kenma froze, unable to tell her that he honestly thought Kuroo was planning to kill him and Nishinoya that day. Luckily the train has reached another station, and people swarmed inside, including an old lady carrying a heavy-looking bag. Hinata stood up quickly and gave her seat to her.

"Oba-chan, you can take my seat," Hinata offered with a smile. The old lady thanked her gratefully, before sitting down.

Hinata moved to stand beside Kenma, who was already leaning against the wall due to the crowd of passengers in the train.

"You okay?" Hinata asked.

Kenma nodded, although he obviously looked uncomfortable. "I'm okay." He backed himself against the wall to give Hinata some space, when the train moved all of a sudden. Hinata hadn't held on to anything just yet hence she stumbled forwards, straight into Kenma's arms.

"Are you okay?" Kenma asked. Hinata looked upon his face, her cheeks flushed because of embarrassment.

"Yeah, I am," she said sheepishly. "Sorry."

Kenma simply stared at her, unable to think of what to do next. His arm lingered about her waist simply to keep her from stumbling, while he held onto the handlebar once again.

_**Some say that hugging a person for at least twenty seconds can make you feel good, but this isâ€|unusualâ€|**_Kenma thought. He found himself bewildered at the different emotions flooding inside him. Part of him thought that Hinata fit perfectly in his embrace, yet another part of him hoped that Hinata wasn't close enough to feel his heart pounding through his rib cage.

"That's right, young man," the old lady whom Hinata offered a seat suddenly spoke. "You better keep your clumsy girlfriend from falling."

"Eh?" Both Hinata and Kenma stared at the old lady awkwardly.

"No, Oba-chan got it wrong â€" " Hinata began.

" â€" we're just friends, you see â€" " Kenma spoke at the same time.

The old lady simply chuckled at the two abashed teenagers. "Well,

well. That's what young couples say all the time..."

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After all the mayhem they've been through, Hinata, Nishinoya, Kuroo and Kenma made it back home safe and sound. They managed to meet up right before they get to the entrance, hence no one took notice that they took separate ways to get back. Kenma quickly took notice of the stuff inside the paper bag Kuroo had carried; he found something that wasn't there hours ago.

"What took you guys so long?" Sugawara asked Hinata the moment they arrived. The members of Karasuno were already in the bus, preparing to go. There were also the guys from Nekoma, who were bidding them farewell.

"Sorry. We had so much fun we didn't notice the time." Hinata had decided not to tell anyone of the events about the gangsters, so that Sugawara might not try to assassinate Kuroo or Kenma in retaliation.

"Is that so?" Sugawara grinned at her happily. "Lucky you."

Hinata chuckled softly to hide the stress that she had felt during her one day adventure around Tokyo.

"Everyone, it's time to go!" Sawamura was already at the doorway of the bus.

"I've already put your things inside, so we can go." Tanaka told Hinata and Nishinoya.

"Thanks, Ryu." Nishinoya answered. He then followed Tanaka and Sugawara into the bus.

Hinata, on the other hand, stopped when Kuroo called his name. She turned around and saw Nekoma's captain approach her together with Kenma.

"Here." Kuroo took out a cute stuffed toy of a cat wearing a red t-shirt from the paper bag and tossed to Hinata.

"Huh?" Hinata caught the stuffed toy, hugging it. She immediately knew it was one of the stuffed animals in the shop they've passed by that morning. "What's this for?"

"Just thought of something to make up for what happened a while ago," Kuroo said. "and some sort of souvenir as well."

"We owe you one for not telling your seniors about the gangsters, too." Kenma muttered.

At this, Hinata gave the two boys a warm smile. "Thanks!" she then went inside the bus.

"Shouko-chan!" Yamamoto cried. "Join us in the next training camp

too!"

"So noisyâ€|" Kenma murmured in irritation.

"Damn straight he is," Kuroo agreed. He then glanced at the Mohawk-head and gave him a threatening look. "You still have a lot of energy to spare, Yamamoto. How'd you like to run around the city tonight?"

"S-sorryâ€|I'll shut upâ€|"

Then the cats simply watched as the crows flew back to their home.

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Uh. Was that a KuroNoya bromance moment? I didn't know what I did there. LAWL.

And did I do KenHina fans a huge favor?

**BTW I kinda want my Suga harem to be a KnB x HQ! crossover fic. Something about two rival schools, but the plot's still vague, and I need help. What do you guys think? Please give your suggestions and opinions by reviewing. **

15. Chapter 15

YO!

mikohoshina: Of course I won't abandon Abracadabra!

Chiisaiuki: *hears your unintelligible fangirl screams*

**DemiseSurvive: Yes, yes I will **

Kestrelflight: Don't worry. The super-requested "time of the month" shall happen. It has to.

Kria: LOL, you wanna see Oba-chan again?

Elindelea: Yeah, I kinda want that to.

Lunary: You actually gave me an idea. You'll probably see more of that plush toy soon.

jo: Thank you for loving this fic!

Blubber: I'll try my best to make more cute scenes aside from the NoyaHina and KenHina ones.

**Everyone Else: Done with Tokyo arc, at last! Now's the time for me to create another crack pairingâ€|and see how far I can go when it

comes to converting shippers.**

Oh, it's time for KageHina versus OiHina. I hope I managed to make Oikawa and Iwaizumi in-character.

Douzo!

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Chapter 15: The Great King's Recovery Stage

After the Tokyo excursion, it was back to practice at Karasuno High's gymnasium. The men's volleyball team became much more determined when it comes to training, all thanks to the losses they have experienced during the practice matches against the City Boy Alliance.

There were other things that had changed as well, after the Tokyo trip.

Naturally, Sugawara and Sawamura were the first to realize it. The bond between the lowerclassmen, particularly Hinata and the first and second year boys had been stronger. Even Tsukishima was somehow more open to them, although the tall blonde was still holding it back by occasionally pissing everyone off. Kageyama, on the other hand, was more often seen with his oddball partner practicing quick, and Nishinoya was talking to her more often than he used to.

It was not a bad thing, unless the reason for their closeness was due to the fact that the boys were starting to have feelings for the female Hinata.

Thus, the third years were contemplating on whether to upgrade the torture system further.

"Shall we get an electric chair?" Sugawara suggested with a smile.

"Suga, we're not giving them death penalty." Sawamura was horrified at the idea.

"Suga, you're not a _**yandere**_, are you?" Asahi asked worryingly.

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"Onee-chan, your hair's gotten longer."

Hinata's little sister Natsu gently grabbed a lock of Hinata's sunflame hair, which was already reaching her shoulders. Hinata hadn't realized that it gotten longer in such a short amount of time. Then again, she hardly noticed a lot of changes surrounding her after her transformation.

"You're right," Hinata stroked her own hair, and glanced at a small mirror which her sister owns. "Maybe I should cut itâ€|"

"No," Natsu blurted out, pouting her lips and shaking her head abruptly in disapproval. "Nee-chan shouldn't cut her pretty hair!"

"But it'll get in the way when I play volleyball," Hinata replied insistently.

At this, Natsu answered her with a sweet smile. "It won't get in the way if we fix it."

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That evening, Natsu had decided to mess with her onee-chan's hair â€" very much to Hinata's annoyance, of course, but she had no choice; Natsu had threatened to have a wild tantrum that night if Shouyou would insist on cutting her own hair.

"Just let your sister do what she wants," said Shouyou's with a loving smile while they were washing the dishes at the kitchen sink. "It's not every day that Natsu gets to doll you up."

"Of course she wouldn't get to do that. I'm a guy," Hinata answered indignantly. "You all seem to forget that."

Her mother giggled softly. "Of course, I still remember. But still, you should let Natsu do what she wants."

"You mean I should allow her to practice being a stylist â€" by messing with my hair and face?"

"Oh, I'm sure you'll look fine. Natsu does her own hair well."

Hinata scowled. Natsu's hair was short; surely it wasn't very hard to manage. "She wants to buy me hair pins and stuff tomorrow."

"Really?" Hinata's mother sounded delighted. "That's great! You should buy a lot of accessories as well."

"Mama!"

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Once she was done helping her mother clean the table and wash the dishes after dinner, Hinata took a hot bath and put on her pajamas in preparation for bedtime. She was already crawling into her bed when she heard her phone rang, buzzing on top of her study desk. Hinata

quickly jumped off her bed and dashed to check the phone screen.

"Kenma?" Hinata's eyebrows arched upon seeing the name of the caller. She pressed the receive button and placed the phone over one ear. "Hello?"

"Shou-chan!" The voice on the other side of the line, however, was from Kuroo. "I guess I'm correct. You're still using your cousin's phone."

"Y-yeahâ€|" Hinata could not keep herself from sounding surprised. "You called me using Kenma's phone â€" "

"He won't give me your number," Kuroo replied, sounding as if he was in a hurry. "So I thought I should justâ€|"

"Kuroo!" Hinata was surprised to hear Kenma shouting in the background. "What are you doing in my room? And why are you using my phone?"

"You barged into Kenma's room without permission?" Hinata asked, baffled.

"Friends do that often," Kuroo replied casually.

"Give me my phone, Kuroo." Kenma began to threaten the bedhead.

Kuroo heaved a sigh of defeat, which seemed like a crackling sound through the phone. "I guess I can't chat with you for long, Shou-chan." His voice then went a notch lower as he whispered to her, "Good night."

"Good night," Hinata answered. She heard a rustling noise, and she realized that Kuroo had returned the phone to its rightful owner, Kenma.

"What did Kuroo say to you?" Kenma asked in an anxious tone.

"Nothing," Hinata answered. "Why does he have to barge into your room and snatch your phone?"

"He's been asking for your number, and I wouldn't give it to him." There was exasperation in Kenma's voice as he spoke. "But he got it nonetheless. Shouyou, if Kuroo sends you a message or call you, don't answer at all."

"Why â€" "

"Just â€" don't." Kenma was insistent, something which Hinata found unusual. "Trust me. Once you tolerate Kuroo's behavior, he won't stop doing what he wants. He'll probably keep in contact with you all the time."

"You sound as if you're talking about the worst thing that could happen." Hinata chuckled.

"That's because I **am** talking about the worst thing that could

happen." Kenma sounded serious. "Promise me you won't answer his calls and messages, Hinata."

"You think I can fend him off that easily?" Hinata retorted tentatively.

"Maybe notâ€¦|But at least he won't bother you very much anymore if you ignore him."

Hinata took a deep breath. "Why are you so keen about this, anyway? I mean, is there anything wrong with messaging one another often? We often text each other, I don't see why I can't do the same thing with Kuroo or anyone else."

There was a moment of silence on the other end. It took a while before Kenma could answer the question. "I just want you to be careful."

"Thanks for worrying, but I can handle myself."

"You've been a boy, Hinata Shouyou. You above everyone else should understand."

"Huh? What do you mean?" Hinata was still puzzled.

Kenma could not help but heave a weary sigh. "I'm not sure who's more stupid â€" you or Lev?"

"EH?"

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"Oi, Oikawa." Aoba Josai's wing spiker, Iwaizumi Hajime could not hide the worry in his voice as he leant his head against the door. "Stop sulking there."

It has always been the same situation since junior high. Whenever Oikawa Tooru, the team captain and official setter of Aoba Josai breaks up with a girl, he would end up in a mood unlike no other. It usually doesn't last for so long, but it has been a cause of many disasters during games and practice matches for the team.

Such was the trouble it causes the team, that Iwaizumi even visited Oikawa's home just to 'console' him.

"Oikawa, your sulking starts to get into my nerves," Iwaizumi nonetheless has a short patience for his childhood friend; he was already banging the door of Oikawa's room. "Let me in."

It took an eternity before Iwaizumi was allowed into the room. There Oikawa was, sitting on his futon in front of the television where a video of one of Shiratorizawa volleyball team's past games was currently being played. It was a good sign, seeing the captain concentrate in making strategies against their longtime rival. Iwaizumi was partially worried about how quickly Oikawa gets over with a girl, but he would not mind it if it's for the benefit of the

team.

"Done sniveling about your ex?" Iwaizumi asked casually.

"Iwa-chan's so callous," Oikawa answered with a pout. "Just because you never had a girlfriend doesn't mean you have the right to sound coldhearted" " "

Iwaizumi did not even allow Oikawa to finish his sentence; immediately he grabbed the object closest to him " which was a volleyball, fortunately " and hurled it straight into the other boy's face.

"Ow" Oikawa held his forehead gingerly. "So mean"and I thought you're here to console me."

"Tch." Iwaizumi was looking more pissed off by the minute. "You don't need consoling at all."

"Of course I need it," said Oikawa. "I've been searching for the right girl, you know that." He sat down and returned his gaze towards the television screen. He then hugged his knees closer to himself, his expression too sullen to be a pretense.

Iwaizumi frowned. Oikawa sure has quite the personality, which often got into his nerves. But despite the talent and the popularity, Iwaizumi could very well see how vulnerable Oikawa was, particularly when it comes to personal matters.

"I really don't get this love drama of yours." Iwaizumi lounged on the futon beside Oikawa, the way he used to back when they were in grade school.

"That's because you never had one " ouch!" Oikawa had to rub the back of his head this time after Iwaizumi smacked him. "You've hurt me twice already!"

"That's what you get for being a sissy!" Iwaizumi scolded him like a mother, albeit the kind of mother that was probably an army general. "You're Oikawa Tooru, for god's sake! All girls are falling head over heels for you. Surely one of them has to be your soul mate."

Oikawa could not help but stare at him in surprise. Iwaizumi was not the type who encourages Oikawa, at least not when it came to annoying personal matters. Nevertheless he had said it, some words of encouragement that would boost Oikawa's morale"as well as give Oikawa something to tease him for.

"I never thought you can be a softy, Iwa-chan."

"Don't make me hit you again."

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"You have no idea how thankful I am that you came," Hinata told Shimizu and Yachi.

Karasuno's managers met up with Hinata Shouyou and her little sister Natsu in front of an accessory store in the town's shopping area the next day. In times of girly emergencies, Hinata always sought the aid of Shimizu and Yachi, and accompanying her sister in shopping was one of those.

"I have nothing to do today, so I'm glad to help," said Shimizu.

"Me too!" Yachi arched her eyebrows uncertainly at Hinata. "Are you really going to shop for accessories?"

Hinata took a deep breath, wearily. "I have to. I don't want my sister to go on a riot." She glanced at Natsu, who folded her arms across her chest in a triumphant manner.

"Hinata-chan's so kind to go this far just to please her sister," Shimizu quipped, much to Hinata's surprise. Yachi, on the other hand, could not suppress a giggle.

"But I'm surprised at your fashion sense, Hinata-chan." Yachi gave Hinata a once-over. Hinata was wearing a denim jumper dress over a green blouse and a cute pair of boots. It was adorable, in a quirky way.

Hinata tilted her head to one side in puzzlement. "What's wrong with my look?"

"Wrong? You actually look perfect." Yachi smiled at her.

"I don't think I should take that as a compliment," Hinata said nervously.

Shimizu had decided to interrupt the conversation before things could begin to get awkward. "All right. Let's go."

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"Hello, Iwa-chan. Good morning!"

__**Ah. Here comes the recovery stage,**_ Iwaizumi thought the moment we was awakened by Oikawa, who barged into his bedroom all of a sudden. __**The hardest part**_

Apparently, Aoba Josai's captain and official setter has finally thought better than to sulk about his rotten love life and has decided to start moving on. Unfortunately, for Iwaizumi, this so-called recovery stage meant that he has to suffer an entire week getting pissed at Oikawa's antics.

"Iwa-chan!" Oikawa promptly slumped next to Iwaizumi, who was still half-asleep. "Why aren't you dressed up yet? Aren't you gonna accompany me today?"

"Huh?!" Iwaizumi grunted. He could not recall a moment when he agreed to accompany the annoying chap. "I never promised!"

"But Iwa-chan had been very nice yesterday," said Oikawa. "I think you should come with me to the shopping district today, as part of consoling my broken heart" " "

Iwaizumi swung a pillow at Oikawa, which the other boy barely dodged. "I'm done with your annoying drama! Get out and let me go back to sleep, Trashykawa."

"Stop calling me names like that!" Oikawa whined.

"Trashy Oikawa!"

"You just rephrased it!"

"Trash King Oikawa!"

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"W-what!" Hinata was wide-eyed and downright speechless when she saw what was inside the store.

When Hinata had reluctantly agreed to buy accessories along with her sister, she was expecting to see a small shop with boxes containing simple stuff for little girls. She was not expecting an entire house with light pink walls, flashy lights, lively pop music and magical princess kind of vibe.

Then again, Hinata Shouyou _**was a boy**_.

"E-eh?" Hinata glanced all around her. The shop was built to look like every teenage girl's paradise. The adorable gingerhead could not believe at the huge variety of accessories she was seeing: hairpins and hairclips and headbands and necklaces and bracelets and even shoes and bags. They all come in different designs, from the classy jewelry to ultramodern chic. There were some cute designs too, like earrings shaped like candy and a bracelet adorned with cute animal-shaped ornaments. They were placed, hung and shelved all over the place, and girls of all ages were swarming everywhere checking them out, like animals in the jungle on a major hunt.

"Don't look so scared, Hinata," Shimizu told her.

"I-I'm not scared!" Hinata replied, although her body went stiff upon seeing the feminine chaos before her. "I" "where" "how shall we do this" " "

"You are petrified, you know!" Yachi said worryingly.

Natsu on the other hand, puffed her cheeks in slight annoyance. "Nee-chan, please stop getting unnecessarily frightened! We're doing this for your own good."

Hinata, unable to understand how shopping could do her any good, nodded absentmindedly in response. "O-okay!"

"Okay!" Natsu dragged her older sister (brother) into the crowd of shoppers, leaving Shimizu and Yachi watching them behind.

"Natsu-chanâ€|she's as energetic as her brother, right?" Yachi asked. Shimizu simply nodded in agreement.

"Shimizu-san! Yachi-san!

Over here!" Hinata waved at the girls and beckoned them to join her and her sister.

"Nee-chan! Look at these!" Natsu showed a cute pair of hairclips to Hinata.

"Natsu, aren't you supposed to choose something simple?" Hinata scowled. The last thing she wanted was for the guys, particularly Kageyama and Tsukishima, to tease her for wearing bunny shaped hairclips.

"I see," Yachi said. "You're hair has gotten longer, so you want something to keep it from obscuring your eyesight while playing volleyball?"

Hinata nodded. "Natsu doesn't want me to get a haircut, so I have to use hairpins and stuffâ€|"

"Your hair isn't very long, so I guess this will do." Shimizu handed Hinata a set of small ponytails, in different colors.

"Ah â€" you'll need these too!" Yachi found a box of thin black hairpins. She picked it up and gave it to the older gingerhead. "Those hairpins will keep your hair from getting into your face."

"Oh. Thanks!" Hinata smiled at the two girls.

Natsu, however, seemed unhappy. "Aren't you going to buy something cute, Nee-chan?"

"Eh?" Hinata furrowed her eyebrows defiantly. "Butâ€|I'm a guy, remember?"

Natsu folded her arms across her chest and glanced away from her rebelliously. "I'm not going home until you buy something cute!"

"EH?!" Hinata whined. She then glanced at Shimizu and Yachi, who both shrugged at her in response.

"What should I do?" Hinata asked.

"Maybe you should just give in to her wish," said Shimizu.

"I thinkâ€|one pair of something cute won't hurt your remaining masculinity," Yachi added.

Hinata took a moment to think about it carefully. Her family was treating her more like a girl as the days passed by. In the end she heaved a sigh as she gave in to Natsu's will.

"Fine," she said. "Just one item, okay?"

Natsu's face finally brightened up. She quickly grabbed Hinata's wrist and pulled her to a section full of cute, girly items.

"Choose something, Nee-chan."

"O-okay!" Hinata took a look at the items displayed. Something caught her eye right away: it was a necklace, a thin chain of silver with a pendant shaped like the sun. "I'll take this one."

Natsu seemed to love her choice of accessory as she gave her a priceless smile in return. "Okay!"

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"Iwa-chan can be stubborn sometimes," Oikawa said in a disappointed tone.

It was supposedly part of his recovery stage. Oikawa had intended to persuade Iwaizumi to go out, just to keep him company. He even wanted to treat Iwaizumi to coffee as a thank-you gift for being 'nice' to him while he was down after the break-up. But Iwaizumi obviously did not want to be disturbed that Sunday – so obvious that Oikawa was driven out of the house by brute force. Oikawa, without anything else to do, had decided to take a leisurely walk on his own.

And as he passed by the shopping district near Iwaizumi's house, Oikawa came up with an idea.

"Maybe I could buy something for Iwa-chan, instead!"

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The girls had decided that they should go to an ice cream parlor after shopping. Hinata had told Shimizu and Yachi to go ahead together with Natsu, while she had to pay for the things she had bought.

"Are you sure?" Shimizu asked.

Hinata nodded. "Lots of people go to the popular new ice cream parlor nearby. You should reserve us a table while it's still early."

Hence Hinata was left in the accessory store, waiting in the long line before the cashier. It took a while before she could finally pay for her purchase and get out of the store.

__**I never thought shopping for girly stuff could be so tiring.
However! **__

Hinata took out a small rectangular box from her shopping bag. In it was the lovely necklace she had just bought. She took out the necklace and raised it up in the air, the light hitting the sun pendant. It shone beautifully, as if it was a small portion of the sun itself.

"It's so pretty!" Hinata smiled.

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Oikawa was planning to buy Iwaizumi something that the guy would use often: _**A book? But does Iwa-chan read often? How about shoes? Perhaps I should give him a watch? But it's not like Iwa-chan's gonna be waiting for a girl on a date or something!"_ Oikawa thought carefully. He glanced at the window display of the shops in the area, hoping to get an idea what kind of gift he should buy.

He was so busy looking around, that he had not noticed the person standing ahead of him on his way to a girls' accessory store.

Oikawa promptly ran into that person, who at that time was busy staring at a necklace she's been holding.

"Sorry," Oikawa apologized " and simply stared, at the beautiful girl staring back at him.

She was smaller than the average teenage girl, and she looked prettier than anyone he had ever seen before. Her hair reached her shoulders, its color reminding Oikawa of the sunset. Her brown eyes were huge and bright, and they stared at him in surprise, which turned into a look of horror all of a sudden.

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Hinata could not believe who she was looking at.

**T-t-the Great King!** Hinata thought. Her body froze, like an alarmed cat. Oikawa Tooru, Aoba Josai's captain and setter, the guy whose team had beaten Karasuno just recently, was standing right in front of her. _**What is he doing here?!**_

Oikawa tilted his head to one side as he asked, "Are you okay?"

**What should I do?**

Hinata's hand shook very hard that she had dropped the necklace she had been holding.

"Oh, you dropped your necklace." Oikawa knelt down to pick the fallen accessory from the ground.

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When Oikawa stood up to give the necklace back, the girl disappeared.

"Huh?" Oikawa looked around, baffled. The lovely girl was gone all of a sudden, and left her necklace behind. Oikawa could only scratch his head in puzzlement.

"And I haven't asked her name yet!" Oikawa muttered regretfully. He then stared at the necklace, a silver chain with a pendant shaped like a sun. It reminded him of the girl's sunset-colored hair right away. Just that simple detail about her left an unforgettable impression on him, along with the warm feeling which cured him of any remaining heartache inside.

**Interesting,** Oikawa thought. For some reason, he could not help but smile.

"I hope I get to see her again."

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There you go!

More OiHina incoming! Of course, KageHina shall be happening soon. I was wondering if I can convert some non-KageHina shippers, though I'm not hoping much.

Hmm!maybe I should try writing IwaHina too? Lol!

I've finally gotten an internship in a government news agency, and it's ten hours a day, so I'll probably won't be updating the next chapters so soon!but don't worry! I'll make sure I'll finish this story.

As for the Suga story, I have some pending titles: Angels Know Karate (romance/humor, HQ x fem!Suga reverse harem), and The Dead Butlers' Society (humor/supernatural, HQ x KnB various pairings). I'm not sure which one I should start working on, really, because I kind of like both ideas. Angels Know Karate is where Suga is this super nice girl who is actually a daughter of the chief of a secret agency. The Dead Butlers' Society is a crossover, and I want various HQ! x KnB pairings (which meant tons of crack pairings) about an organization of inhuman butlers who choose their masters to serve. Then there's the War of Roses, a story about two rival schools, and is also a crossover. Of course, as I am currently focusing on my internship, my sched won't allow me to write all these at once, let alone have them uploaded. Still, writing fanfics is the only thing I won't get tired of doing, so I will try my best to get to show you more of my stories.

****Got any suggestions? Please feel free to leave a review.****

16. Chapter 16

****Hehehe.****

****AnimeLoverMars: Yes, yes, Hinata is the baby of the team!
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****Blubber: As you wish, a TsukkiHina scene!****

****Owl's Prayer: Don't worry, I'll make NoyaHina moments soon. It's Nishinoya's wish which started all this mayhem, anyway.****

****KuroshiroYuu: YES! ALL x HINATA!****

****TheCaptainOfShips: You approve more boys falling for little Hina, right? RIGHT? .****

****Chiisaiuki: Yes, expect that moment to happen soon.****

****GwenlStacy: Yes, I'm glad you are excited for the Battle of the Kings****

****Itachisgurl93: thank you!****

****Lotus Sword: I'm glad you find Oikawa in-character. I was worried that I won't be able to pull it off properly. And yes, IwaHina is probably going to be hilarious, with Oikawa wailing all over Iwaizumi to stay away from his gingerheaded crush. XD****

****Schrodinger8: Vote taken.****

****Lunary: LOL, it's Suga who likes torturing the boys, not me! And yes, Kenma sure is getting a headache, because there's no stopping Captain Bedhead. XDD****

****Tina Vainamoinen: Thank you being so faithful! You don't have to find a freshwater in the ocean, here's the new chapter!****

****Female President Coco-sensei: Wow, that's a fast switch.****

****Dusk Rose: Flashâ€|no, I don't think I can do that to my precious ginger elf.****

****Shittyboy: lol, I understand, I tend to be lazy just like you sometimes.****

****Guest: Whoever you are, thanks for the idea!****

****Everyone else: So The Great King has appeared at last. OiHina vs KageHina incoming!****

****Hey, by the way, since I'm planning to make KnB x HQ crossover, would you like to suggest a KnB x HQ ship? I was thinking of AkaYama or AkaHina, as well as a love triangle between Kagami, Sugawara and Himuro (knowing that Kagami likes elegant girls, and is there anyone**

more elegant than a female Sugamama?). Aomine x Kenma ship is also ringing in my head like crazy. Also, Murasakibara x Nishinoya looks cute, ne? **

Please leave some suggestions. I need them so badly.

Douzo!

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Chapter 16: Little Miss Right (Part 1)

The new ice cream parlor in the area was a fun, relaxing place, perfect for people who had spent long hours walking and shopping. Natsu, Shimizu and Yachi had taken a seat at a table by the window.

When Hinata entered the ice cream parlor, she was sweating profusely, and was breathing heavily as if she had run a ten kilometer marathon race.

"Are you okay, Hinata?" Yachi looked at the gingerhead worryingly.

Hinata sat down beside her little sister Natsu before answering the question.

"Yeah," she said, and then she rested her head on the table wearily.

"Did something happen?" Shimizu asked.

"Nothing," Hinata replied. She did not want to bother the girls any further. Oikawa Tooru may have not realized who she was, anyway. "Have you ordered already?"

Yachi shook her head. "We've decided to wait for you before ordering anything."

"Really?" Hinata then glanced at Natsu. "What would you like to eat?"

"Strawberry parfait!" Natsu beamed at her in reply. "Onee-chan likes that too, right?"

"Yeah, I do." Hinata answered with a smile.

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If Iwaizumi had wished a peaceful, quiet Sunday—he wouldn't have it, unfortunately. Not when Oikawa Tooru was barraging him with phone

calls just a few hours after invading his house that morning.

"Iwa-chan!" Oikawa sounded very cheerful that day, much to Iwaizumi's surprise. The guy was supposed to be in his recovery stage, after all. "Iwa-chan, are you awake?"

Iwaizumi was definitely awake, all right; he could no longer get back to sleep after Oikawa's intrusion. Aoba Josai's famous setter was more effective than the loudest alarm clock or the bitterest coffee when it comes to waking a person up.

"Yeah, I am." Iwaizumi grunted while on his way to the bathroom. "What did you call me for?"

There was an odd sound on the other line, as if Oikawa was fighting the urge to giggle. Iwaizumi furrowed his eyebrows as annoyance crept into his face. He grabbed his toothbrush and put a generous amount of toothpaste on it.

"Oi. Stop beating around the bush, before I put this phone down."

"Sorry, Iwa-chan," Oikawa spoke as if he was about to say the greatest news in the world. "It's just that I met this girl and she's very cute and â€" "

"Hold a sec," Iwaizumi had his phone pinned between his ear and his shoulder as he was brushing his teeth. "You called me because of a girl? Just when are you going to learn, you idiot?"

"Let me finish my story, Iwa-chan," Oikawa answered. "So I met this really, really cute girl while I was shopping for a thank-you gift for you." There was something unusual in his manner of speech, Iwaizumi noticed; for the handsome setter of Aoba Josai, who had spent nights sulking in his bedroom, now seemed to be the happiest young man in Japan. "I accidentally ran into her. She dropped this necklace, and â€" being the gentleman that I was â€" I picked it up for her, but she disappeared all of a sudden!"

"Uh-huh," Iwaizumi said nonchalantly. "She doesn't like you then."

"Eh?" Oikawa was baffled.

"You said she disappeared, right? She ran away from you, obviously. That means she doesn't like you." Iwaizumi spoke plainly after rinsing his mouth.

"Iwa-chan, you're so mean!" Oikawa whined. "And I thought that you're gonna support my assumption."

"What is your assumption, exactly?" Iwaizumi asked in a weary tone as he trod back into his room to change clothes.

"That I've finally found Miss Right!" Oikawa answered with all certainty which startled Iwaizumi.

"Miss Right." Iwaizumi took a deep breath. He had a lot of explaining to do to make Oikawa understand the harsh reality about girls and

soul mates and love life (which, to be honest, Iwaizumi himself could not understand either). "Oikawa, you don't even know who that girl was. How can you be so sure she's the one?"

"But that's what makes it exciting, right? I don't know her yet, but the fact that she had left me something valuable she would obviously come and search for itâ€|" Oikawa spoke rapidly, animatedly â€" the same way that a scientist would speak of a theory he could prove to be true. "I'm sure I'm gonna meet her again someday. I can feel it."

There was a certain passion in Oikawa's voice, a certain eagerness which made Iwaizumi unable to press any further. "I don't know, Oikawa. Justâ€|don't expect too much. There are a lot of things you should focus on."

"I know, I know." Oikawa chuckled. "I'm really sure I'm gonna see Miss Right again, so until that moment comes I will focus solely on volleyball and nothing else."

"That's good. Don't let the fan girls distract you."

"Eh? I can't do that, Iwa-chan. You know the girls can't live without me."

"_**You're**_ the one who will not live long if you lose your focus."

"I'm sorry, Iwa-chan! I promise you I'll practice harder!"

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"I can't believe shopping can exhaust a person so much," Hinata said as she promptly slumped in a chair the moment she and Natsu came into their house.

"It's natural for Onee-chan to feel that, because she used to be a boy," Natsu replied with a smile.

Hinata gave her sister a look. "I _**am**_ a boy."

"Not with that body, you're not." Natsu stuck out her tongue stubbornly.

"I just can't win against you, can I?" Hinata stood up and walked into her bedroom. She then sprawled onto her bed, thinking about what happened that morning. Thanks to the fateful encounter with the Great King, Hinata had dropped the necklace she had bought, and ultimately lost it.

"And it was pretty expensive, tooâ€|" Hinata murmured regretfully. Then she felt her cellphone buzzing within the pocket of her jumper dress, and she quickly fished it out, unfolding it to read the message.

[13:05] Shou-chan, it's me, Kuroo. How's your day going? Have you any problems whatsoever?

"Kuro-chan?" Hinata raised an eyebrow. She rapidly typed a reply afterwards.

[13:06] Kind of. How did you find out?

Hinata then placed the phone beside her. Feeling exhausted after going out with her sister and her friends, she was about to take a nap when the phone suddenly rang. After groping the sheets in search of the gadget, she finally got her cellphone and pressed the receive button to answer.

"Hello?" Hinata asked drowsily.

"I did tell you to **ignore** Kuroo's messages, didn't I?" Kenma sounded extremely annoyed.

Hinata rolled onto her stomach, surprised. "How did you â€" "

"I **told you**, she's gonna send me a reply." she heard Kuroo shout triumphantly in the background. Hinata could not help but bite her lower lip; she could very well feel how irritated Kenma was at that moment.

"Sorry, Kenma..." Hinata spoke apologetically.

"I doubt that could stop Kuroo from tormenting me any further," Kenma replied, obviously not accepting the apology just yet. Kuroo on the other hand was chanting inaudibly, though Hinata was pretty sure it had something to do with him winning against Kenma. "By the wayâ€|you said in your text that you have a problem?"

"It's not a big deal," Hinata rolled onto her back and stared at the ceiling. "I just saw one of our formidable opponents in volleyball and I had to run away."

"You ran away because you thought he would recognize you?"

"Yeahâ€|something like that." Hinata touched the side of her face absentmindedly.

"I think you're getting a bit paranoid."

"Iâ€|guess. But I can't help it, you know. My situation'sâ€|too complicated."

"It's not like everyone's going to believe that you wereâ€|" There was tentativeness in Kenma's voice; Kuroo still must be in the room with him.

"Yeah, I know," Hinata replied, understanding what the boy meant. "But stillâ€|I don't want people to freak out if they find out that I had switched genders for mysterious reasons."

Kenma took a deep breath before answering her. "I understand," he spoke softly.

Hinata smiled. "Thanks."

"Again, don't call Kuroo, nor even send him a reply."

"Aren't you supposed to tell him to stop contacting me in the first place?"

"You know him," Kenma's tone sounded exasperated again. "I doubt he'll listen to my warning."

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Nishinoya's mind was clouded with thoughts, that he could no longer see, nor hear the television right in front of him. He was spending the afternoon at home watching a popular game show, when the image of Hinata Shouyou suddenly entered his mind.

The gingerhead never left his mind for more than an hour.

Nishinoya scratched his head in frustration. Everything about his underclassman was frustrating the hell out of him. After Hinata morphed into a girl, Nishinoya had sworn to protect her at all costs, and to find a solution to her gender switch as well.

Noya still wants to protect Hinata, but this time he was asking himself if he should still bother searching for a solution to turn Hinata Shouyou back to being a dude.

**What am I thinking? Of course I should help Shouyou!** Nishinoya scolded himself.

_**But how can you possibly turn Shouyou back to his old self? He turned into a girl all of a sudden, like magicâ€|**_Nishinoya rubbed his chin while thinking deeply.

"_Maybe magic is the solution to your problem!_"

"Eh?" Nishinoya was snapped out of his thoughts upon hearing the word magic. His attention went back to the television, where a commercial ad was being aired.

"_If there are things happening around you that science cannot explain, then it must be the work of fate!_"

"Fate?" Nishinoya approached the television screen as the image of a hooded individual holding a crystal ball appeared.

"_Oha-Asa's head fortune teller shall tell you everything that you want to know! Just come to the following venues on the following datesâ€|_"

"Come to the following venuesâ€|" Nishinoya gazed at the box on the lower part of the screen and read the venues where the fortune telling shall take place.

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Hinata unlocked the door of the clubroom and tiptoed her way in. It's not as if there was anyone around that afternoon, though. She just felt like sneaking around, hoping that no guy would come in while she was fixing her hair.

She sat on the floor and gently put down her bag, making as little noise as possible. She unzipped her bag and took out the small packet of ponytails.

"What are you doing?"

Hinata jolted in shock when she heard Tsukishima's voice from behind her. She looked over her shoulders and there he was, standing at the doorway of the room, giving her an appraising look.

"W-w-why are you here?" Hinata stammered when she asked him.

"Why am I here?" Tsukishima raised an eyebrow, the way one does when somebody asks a stupid question. "This is the room for the volleyball club, right?" he then noticed the ponytails in Hinata's hand, and smiled. "Are you about to beautify yourself?"

"O-o-of course not!" Hinata blurted out in reply.

Tsukishima smirked at her, apparently not believing a word she said. He leant against the wall and folded his arms across his chest as he looked down at her in a taunting manner. "Do you even know how to use those?"

"Do you?"

"What?" "A vein pulsed on Tsukishima's forehead. "Such an impressive retort from someone who has to take supplementary classes all the time."

"I'm serious," Hinata answered, this time in a pleading tone. "I _**am**_ asking you if you can tie somebody's hair."

The blonde gave the gingerhead an incredulous look. "You want me to tie your hair?"

Hinata stared at him with her big, teary, pleading brown eyes. It was not done on purpose, but her stare had the capability to melt even the coldest and the hardest heart.

**There it goes, that deadly trap of a gaze,** Tsukishima said to himself. He had been wondering how many times the gingerhead had used the tactic to her advantage.

**What am I thinking? She's too stupid to even think of any tacticâ€¦** Tsukishima smiled in spite of himself.

**Maybe that's what makes the tactic effectiveâ€¦**

"What are you smiling at?" Hinata narrowed her eyes at him in

suspicion.

"Nothing." Tsukishima knelt beside her and took a piece of ponytail from her hand. "You have a comb?"

Hinata quickly fished a comb from within her bag and handed it to him. "Thanks!"

"Don't thank me. I'm planning to make you look like a deranged chicken, by the way." Tsukishima smoothed her sunset-colored hair, and was surprised at how soft it felt in his hands. He combed her hair in neat, careful strokes, and then held her hair with one hand while tying the ponytail with the other. Tsukishima didn't have a younger sister at home to whom he could do such thing, but he easily fixed Hinata's hair.

"I hate to ask this, but how do I look?" Hinata asked, looking really embarrassed with herself.

"Didn't I tell you I'll make you look like a deranged chicken?" Tsukishima quipped.

"No kidding. How do I look?"

Tsukishima gave the girl a once over. The ponytail was simple, apparently done for the sole purpose of keeping her hair away from her face during practice. But the fact that he knew it was Hinata Shouyou somehow changes it all. Even the simplest things about her becomes unusual, becomes interesting, becomes " "

**Charming,** Tsukishima was about to say, when the door suddenly creaked open.

"Tsukki, I'm sorry I came late, the teacher asked me to do something " " Yamaguchi suddenly entered the room and froze when he saw the blonde and the ginger sitting on the floor. "What's going on here?"

"Yamaguchi!" Hinata spoke to the newly arrived boy anxiously. "Do I look like a deranged chicken?"

Yamaguchi gave her a puzzled look. "Huh?"

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After arguing whether Hinata looked like a crazy chicken or not (Hinata insisting that Tsukishima did do something horrible to her hair and Yamaguchi explaining to her the truth non-stop), Hinata finally followed Tsukishima and Yamaguchi to the gymnasium, where the rest of the team had already gathered for practice.

"Oh, Hinata you look good today!" Sugawara greeted her kouhai with a compliment.

"Do you still believe Tsukki turned you into a chicken?" Yamaguchi told Hinata.

"How am I supposed to know?" Hinata pouted. "You're Glasses's wingman, you're probably lying as well."

Yamaguchi could only roll his eyes in disbelief.

"Give up already, Yamaguchi. She won't believe you." Tsukishima changed into his volleyball shoes.

"Sugawara-san, do I look like a deranged chicken?" Hinata asked Suga in a worried tone.

Sugawara shook his head. "No, you look fine." he assured her with a smile.

Hinata placed a hand on her chest as she heaved a sigh of relief. "Thank goodness." She then glanced about, as if searching. "I don't see Kageyama around."

Sugawara arched his eyebrows in mild surprise. "Wellâ€|aren't you with him?"

Hinata shook her head in reply. "I haven't seen him until now."

"I saw him talking to Nishinoya-san outside," Tanaka spoke.

"Eh? About what?" Hinata wondered.

The bald-head shrugged in response, before going inside the equipment room to get the volleyballs and other gear.

"Everyone, let's get ready for practice!" Sawamura shouted.

"Osu!" the team shouted in reply.

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By the time Kageyama and Nishinoya entered the gym, everyone was getting ready for practice. Hinata took a break from warm up exercises and ran to the raven-haired setter.

"Kageyama!"

Kageyama paused at the doorway, his eyes on Hinata's hair. "What's with the hairdo?"

"Do I look like a deranged chicken?" Hinata asked worryingly.

"What the heck are you talking about?" Kageyama replied, exasperated.

"Oh, Hinata! You look good today!" Nishinoya could not keep himself from complimenting her.

Hinata blushed, in spite of herself. "Thanksâ€|"

This purely feminine gesture did not escape Kageyama's keen eyesight. As the days pass by, everyone was getting used to Hinata's female form, and Hinata was slowly and unconsciously becoming a girl herself. Kageyama knew that this shift in Hinata's psyche was going to affect the team in the future, and he himself had to admit that he was a bit worried.

__**I'm getting used to thisâ€¦to her. But I shouldn'tâ€¦**__

Maybe he should not ignore Nishinoya's idea, after all.

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"A fortune teller?"

Nishinoya had dragged Kageyama outside the gym before the start of practice. The libero looked serious, that's why Kageyama could not believe the idea that has been suggested to him.

"You think a fortune teller can tell us how to turn Hinata back into a boy?" Kageyama asked.

"I know it is ridiculous, but it's worth a try, right?" Nishinoya answered. "Come to think of it, Hinata's case is so unusual it can only be done by magic."

"I don't know, Nishinoya-sanâ€¦" Kageyama doesn't believe in fate, hence he doesn't believe in astrologists as well.

"There's a popular fortune teller coming to town," Nishinoya told him. "I've looked it up on the Internet, and the messages in the forums say that his predictions are highly accurate."

"Aren't fortune tellers accurate because they spoke vaguely?" Kageyama was very doubtful.

"Yeah, you're right. But it's not a risky idea, so I don't mind trying."

"Why are you telling me this, anyway? Shouldn't you be talking to Hinata instead?"

"Ah. Wellâ€¦" Nishinoya scratched his head. "That's becauseâ€¦"

Kageyama narrowed his eyes at his senpai. "Becauseâ€¦"

"You see," Nishinoya glanced away from his kouhai. "The fortune tellerâ€¦is coming to Seijoh's festival."

"Huh?!" Kageyama was dumbstruck.

__**Why does it have to be in Aoba Josai, of all places?*_

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Kageyama had a hard time trying to get Hinata's attention throughout the practice at the gymnasium. First, he had no idea how to tell Hinata to consult a fortune teller about her gender swap. Second, he could feel the eyes of his seniors on him, particularly Sugawara and Sawamura. Hence he was only thankful that Hinata would always walk beside him once they leave the school.

"Oi, Hinata." Kageyama could not even spare a glance at the gingerhead, as he was still thinking about how to ask her to go to Aoba Josai's cultural festival. Somehow the gesture seemed awkward to the raven-haired setter, not only because his ex senpai Oikawa Tooru was studying in Seijoh, but also because he's asking Hinata Shouyou, now a girl, to go out with him. "The festival at Seijoh is gonna be held this week, andâ€|"

"Are you gonna ask me out?" Hinata quipped while grinning at him.

It took less than a second for Kageyama's face to redden. "D-dumbass! Why would I ask you out on a date?" he blurted out.

"Date?" Hinata raised an eyebrow. "What are you talking about? I thought you want me to accompany you to Seijoh so that you'll have a reunion with your ex-teammates in Kitagawa Daiichiâ€|"

Kageyama's blush deepened, out of embarrassment. "I-I know what you're saying!" he took a deep breath to expel his nerves. "But that's not it. I'm not going to Seijoh to attend a reunionâ€|where did you get that stupid idea from, anyway?"

"I'm just making a guess," Hinata answered with a shrug. "So, why would you want to go there?"

"Nishinoya-san told me that there's gonna be a famous fortune teller in Seijoh, and I would like to meet him."

"Youâ€|want to consult a fortune teller? What for?"

"It's not for me, you idiot!" Kageyama gritted his teeth in annoyance. "It's for you. So that we find out how you've become a girl."

"Soâ€|we're going to Seijoh to meet a fortune teller, and find out how I changed?"

Kageyama nodded. "Nishinoya-san's coming with us as well."

Hinata became silent for a while. She stared thoughtfully at the road ahead. Her silence made Kageyama feel uneasy â€" he had no idea why.

Hinata suddenly broke the silence. "Okay. Where shall we meet up?"

Kageyama, somehow relieved, smiled at her as he spoke. "We'll meet outside the school at morning. The fortune teller's a pretty famous

one, so there'll probably be a lot of people if we go there late."

Hinata nodded, implicating that she understood his instructions. "Okay. It's a date, then."

Of course, the word 'date' meant something else when Hinata had said it, but Kageyama blushed nonetheless.

"Dumbass Hinata," he murmured.

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**Haha, well. Time to make sailors move from one ship to another.
#AbandonShipOrNot**

XDD

Looks like Oikawa's right, after all.

17. Chapter 17

Omg.

EvilTsukiMarrionette: Thanks! (Y)

**Female President Cocoa-sensei: OiHina! *screams with you*
OIHINA!**

MoreOrLessBien: Yes, your vote still counts! I'm glad to see OiHina shippers reviewing my fic. Somehow I get to see that there is a huge variety of Haikyuu ships, thanks the shippers. BTW, you don't happen to be a university professor, are you? I mean, the surname of my professor in Media Literacy is Bienâ€|

Saxhyske: Yay! I finally got another review from you! I'm not sure how many times I'm gonna put KnB reference in this fic, because as I have said, I'm going to make a KnB x HQ cross-over, soâ€|

Lunary: Oh, there'll be chaos, all rightâ€| :3

Blubber: AkaKage? Yeah, I think that'll workâ€|I can somehow imagine a yandere!Akashi fawning over our Bakageyama

Shittyboy: I can imagine how hard it must have been for you not to scream while everyone's asleepâ€| :D

GwenlStacy: Why do you hate that Oikawa thinks Hinata is Miss Right? I actually think it's cute! And did I convert you to abandon ship and sail on TsukkiHina instead? :3

EminaRukiax: Yes, Oikawa is like Kise, and Iwaizumi is like Kasamatsu! XD

****TheCaptainOfShips:** I'm not going anywhere, don't worry!**

****aya-.-desu:** lol, that's exactly what I want to happen!**

****Tina Vainamoinen:** You're welcome!**

****DemiseSurvive:** I really like your suggested ships, although I think Kageyama x Kise is going to be funnier than Kise x Sawamura (I mean, I kinda favor a Kazunari x Sawamura, as Papa Daichi is exactly the kind of guy who can put an end to Takao's wildness)â€|Anyway, thanks to you, I finally found a perfect match for Tsukki and Midorima (which shall be Teppei and Kuroo)!**

****Kim123kn:** thank you!**

****TheAwesomeCocoPuff:** YES, THEY SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT SUGA INDEED XDD AND I WON'T TELL YOU HOW KENMA GOT THE TASER AT ALL**

****Chiisaiuki:** I wanna see how Tobio-chan gets pissed at Oikawa as well!**

****KisaragiMaru:** I read your "OikawaOikawaOikawaOikawaOikawa" in a singsong voice, like
"HangoverHangoverHangoverHangoverHangover"**

****Lotus Sword:** LOL, I'm glad you find Hinata asking everyone if she looks like a deranged chicken hilarious. Did it really suit her character though?**

****Itachisgurl93, Kei-kei Yuki:** Thanks for loving my fic!**

****Everyone else:** This is chapter 17 for you! And author-sama said:
"Let there be OiHinaâ€|" â€" **

****And there's OiHina.****

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 17: Little Miss Right (Part 2)****

Hinata stepped down the entryway and put on a pair of sandals, brown colored and tied around the ankles. She then checked the contents of her bag to see if she had forgotten anything.

"Shou-chan!" Hinata's mother shouted from the kitchen. "Make sure you come back before evening, or your father's going to get worried!"

"Yes!" Hinata stood up and walked over to the door.

"Good luck with your date, sweetie!"

"I'm not going on a date, Mom!" Hinata smiled awkwardly, before leaving. "Bye!"

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"Today's gonna be a fun day," Oikawa said with a flourish. "Nee, Iwa-chan?"

Students of Aoba Josai have been up very early to prepare for their annual school festival. Every classroom was decorated and changed into a specific theme that the class had decided to follow. On the school grounds were various stalls, set up by different clubs to sell many varieties of food that exists.

"Shut up and help us set up our booth," Iwaizumi yelled at the captain of their volleyball team. They were going to have a booth that sells takoyaki. Kindaichi and Matsukawa were placing the booth's signboard while Iwaizumi was being assisted by Hanamaki in preparing the utensils.

"Don't worry, Iwa-chan, I'll be of great help later on. We'll have high sales because of me!"

"What makes you think _**that**_" networks of veins began to appear all over Iwaizumi's face.

"Well, the girls buy your stale takoyaki because I'm in your booth!" "ow!" Oikawa, unable to shut his mouth, was nudged hard in the rib by Iwaizumi.

"By the way," Hanamaki said. "The Student Council is going to hold a contest for the girls in this festival."

"What about it?" Iwaizumi asked, out of curiosity.

Hanamaki shrugged. "They say that they will search for the prettiest female guest in the school and she shall be awarded!"

"Surely no girl can match the beauty of my Sunset-chan," Oikawa scoffed.

"Sunset-chan?" The other boys, save Iwaizumi, were puzzled.

Iwaizumi heaved a weary sigh. "He's talking about the girl he met somewhere." Truth be told, he wished Oikawa wouldn't mention his "Miss Right" to the rest of the team. Chances are the captain would go on and on about how he had met the girl of his dreams, until one day reality will hit him hard and "well, he'll probably sulk in his room for long nights again."

"Didn't Oikawa-san just break up with another girl recently?" Kindaichi could not help but ask.

Oikawa smiled knowingly, and shook a finger at his underclassman. "Kindaichi, I know you're inexperienced, and you need mentoring when

it comes to the matters of the heart and relationshipsâ€|"

His speech was quickly cut off when Iwaizumi, in an act of utter irritation, gave him a karate chop on the other side of his rib.

"Ouch!" Oikawa held the assaulted side of his torso gingerly.

"Shut it, Trashykawa. Don't teach crap to your kouhai!" Iwaizumi yelled.

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"What's taking that idiot so long?" Kageyama said in exasperation.

It has been decided that Hinata was going to meet Kageyama and Nishinoya at the entrance of Karasuno at morning. Plan was to travel to Aoba Josai by commuting; hence they had to leave early. But Hinata was fifteen minutes late, and Kageyama was not known for his patience.

"Calm down, Kageyama." Nishinoya made a slight effort to keep his underclassman from exploding. "She must have trouble getting permission from her parents or something."

"If she did, she should've sent us a message!" Kageyama could not keep calm. Just the fact that they were going to Seijoh, the school where his ex-teammates are, was more than enough to agitate him.

_**If they see me there, there's gonna be troubleâ€|**_Kageyama then thought of Hinata.

_**And what if they see Hinata â€" **_He closed his eyes and thought of the elfin gingerhead, when an image of Oikawa Tooru suddenly formed in his mind.

**Oh, god, I just hope we get out of Seijoh aliveâ€|**

"She's here!" Nishinoya said. Kageyama noticed a hint of excitement in the libero's voice.

"Oi! Nishinoya-san! Kageyama!" they could hear Hinata shouting from downhill.

"Hinata you dumbass," Kageyama shouted. "I already told you to come early â€" "

The genius setter was supposed to be pissed at that moment, really. But the moment Hinata came running towards them he finally understood why Nishinoya sounded excited â€" and on top of that, Kageyama had realized why he should be seriously worried about entering the Seijoh territory.

Kageyama was not into fashion, but he knows a good-looking girl when

he sees one.

He was seeing one right now in fact, and it was driving him insane because Hinata Shouyou was not supposed to be seen as a beautiful girl when she was not even born a girl in the first place. But there she stood before him, wearing a white short-sleeved blouse over a navy blue and white polka dot skirt, and a pair of flats. Her sunflame hair, which now reached past her shoulders, was kept in place by a pair of white hair clips, and she was carrying a small white shoulder bag.

"Sorry," Hinata spoke with an apologetic smile. "I had to help with the morning chores before leaving the houseâ€|"

"W-why didn't you tell us beforehand..?" Kageyama's voice softened. He glanced away from her to avoid her eyes. He could not understand why he wanted to avoid her gaze, but he felt like doing it at that time.

"It's all right, Hinata!" Nishinoya, always the cheerful senior, spoke with a grin. "Let's go! We have no time to lose!"

Hinata nodded in agreement. "Right, let's go!"

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"Coooooooool!"

It was very much expected of Hinata Shouyou to squeal in excitement upon going to a lively place such as a cultural festival, albeit said cultural festival was hosted by a rival school which had just defeated her own team recently. But you have to give it to Aoba Josai: they clearly take their events seriously. If the huge banner above the school's entrance was not enough to shout out how grand the festival was, there were the many different booths all over the school grounds, now teeming with hordes of visitors from all over the town, and beyond.

"Don't look so amazed," Kageyama told Hinata in an irritated tone. "We're not here to have fun."

Hinata pouted her lips as she glared at him. "Why is it that you're so boring when it comes to things unrelated to volleyball?"

Kageyama surely got pissed off at the frank statement, but Nishinoya found it rather funny. "Hinata is right, Kageyama. Why don't you relax a little? It's not like we're here to have a match against Seijoh."

"Butâ€|" Kageyama frowned. "I don't think we should stay for long -"

"Don't worry too much!" Nishinoya grinned from ear to ear. "Besides, our own school festival is going to happen soon. We might as well get some ideasâ€|"

Kageyama could not remember if there had been a time when the Guardian Deity of Karasuno had been so active when it comes to extracurricular activities such as school festivals, so he was quite surprised at this suggestion. "I think you just want to dilly-dally, Noya-san!" he muttered suspiciously.

Nishinoya threw back his head and laughed out loud, as if his ulterior motive was something he should be proud of. "You saw right through it, didn't you? Good!"

"We can go to the fortune teller later!" Hinata suddenly broke in. He then grabbed both boys by the arm. "Let's have some fun!"

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Annoying to Iwaizumi he may be, but Oikawa have kept his word when he said that he would boost the sales of the volleyball team's takoyaki. The wing spiker had to admit (no matter how hard it was for him), Oikawa's popularity did have an good effect on them at this point. They have a lot of customers (mostly girls) and their product was selling very well.

"See, Iwa-chan? I told you I am a great help to your business." Oikawa smiled at Iwaizumi, who was busy cooking for the customers. The other boys were busy in preparing the ingredients, packing the takoyaki, receiving payment or advertising their booth all over the school.

"Stop gloating," Iwaizumi answered with all seriousness, "and do your job as our business mascot."

"Mascot?" Oikawa looked horrified. "That's so rude!"

"Oikawa-san!" a group of girls crowded around their stall. "May we take a picture with you?"

Oikawa turned around and flashed them the best smile in his arsenal. "Sure. But would you like to help us first? We must sell all of our takoyaki!"

"We'll buy ten packs!" the girls answered right away.

And so Oikawa had a moment with the girls, while Iwaizumi was left in peace.

"I'm glad we could make use of his popularity today," Matsukawa, back from roaming around the school to advertise, spoke when he entered their booth.

"Yeah!" Iwaizumi could not help but agree.

"Why is Oikawa daydreaming over there?"

"Huh?" Iwaizumi stole a sidelong look at Oikawa, who seemed to have

changed all of a sudden. The Great King was deeply rooted on the ground, staring wide-eyed ahead as if he had seen the Eighth Wonder of the World.

"Oi, Oikawa. Are you okay?" Iwaizumi asked. He began to have a bad feeling about this unusual behavior.

And then, without an answer, Oikawa jumped over the counter of their booth and ran away at full speed.

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"Are you sure we should just wander around?" Kageyama asked for the nth time. Unlike Hinata and Nishinoya, who were like a pair of kids in an amusement park, he was hesitant about staying in Seijoh for too long. Kageyama just could not get rid of his worries: encountering Seijoh's volleyball team, Oikawa seeing him, Oikawa seeing Hinata

__**It's not that I care, but knowing Oikawa-san

"It's fine, don't worry!" Hinata answered with a carefree smile.

Nishinoya had bought ice cream for the three of them. "Here, Shouyou." he handed Hinata a strawberry and vanilla-flavored ice cream in a cone.

"Thanks, Noya-san." Hinata gratefully took the ice cream. Nishinoya then gave Kageyama a chocolate and banana ice cream.

"I asked around, and the students said that the fortune teller will appear this afternoon," Nishinoya said.

Kageyama scowled. He just could not hide his fear. "We really shouldn't stay here for long."

"You're worried that your ex-teammates will see you?" Hinata asked.

"No " Kageyama furrowed his eyebrows. He hated to admit it, but he just felt uneasy. He glanced away from them. " yeah I guess."

Hinata sighed. "You're such a scaredy-cat. And to think that you're a guy who scares the hell out of people when you smile..."

"Huh?!" Kageyama grunted in irritation. And to make things worse, Nishinoya laughed at him.

"Um, excuse me"

The three crows turned around and saw a girl wearing the Seijoh uniform, with an arm band that says "Student Council".

"You're outsiders, am I right?" she asked, and the three of them

nodded yes in reply. She then smiled at Hinata. "The Student Council has a contest for the female guests that have come here today, and I would like to congratulate you."

"Me?" Hinata arched her eyebrows in wonder. She glanced at Kageyama and Nishinoya, who shrugged at her, puzzled by the situation.

"What contest is it, exactly?" Kageyama asked the Student Council girl.

"She won the contest for the prettiest girl in Seijoh!" the girl exclaimed happily. "You know, the moment she came to our festival, we're sure she's the one. It's a unanimous decision." She then looked at Hinata hopefully. "Please come with us. Seijoh is going to have a show this afternoon, and we're hoping that you will grace our school with your beauty!"

"HUH?!" Hinata, Kageyama and Nishinoya were completely aghast.

"N-n-no!" Hinata almost dropped her ice cream because her entire body was shaking in nervousness. "Iâ€¦I don't deserve to be called prettiest or anythingâ€¦I'm scared of standing in front of so many people, I'll probably freeze on stageâ€¦"

"But we're only here for the Oha-Asa fortune teller," Nishinoya told the Student Council girl.

"Right," Kageyama agreed. "Besides, she can't make an appearance on stage if she doesn't want to."

The girl frowned, clearly disappointed about being rejected. "I think I can make an arrangement regarding the fortune teller, since we invited the Oha-Asa company in the first placeâ€¦"

"You don't have to do that," Nishinoya blurted out. "I think Hinata here is fine with waiting in line. Right, Hinata?"

Hinata, however, was no longer around to answer him.

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"Where did that Assykawa go, damn it?"

Iwaizumi was getting really irritated. It has been almost an hour since Oikawa had left their takoyaki stall without a word. Iwaizumi had led a small search party to look for the team captain â€" although **hunt the captain down** was a more suitable term, based on Iwaizumi's current mood.

"If I get my hands on that guy, he's dead." Iwaizumi was on his way to one of the large gymnasiums in the school. He left his work just to search for Oikawa, running to and fro, upstairs and downstairs, just to find him. He even called Oikawa's family to ask if the third-year setter had gone home. But the guy was nowhere to be found.

Thinking he might be practicing volleyball despite the busy day, Iwaizumi went to look for Oikawa in the gymnasium, only to find somebody else.

The gym was to be used for an event that afternoon hence it was unlocked. Nevertheless, Iwaizumi did not expect to see a stranger wandering inside. A girl, who was barely five feet tall, was standing at the door leading to where the volleyball court was.

"Excuse me," Iwaizumi said as he approached the girl. "Are you lost?"

The girl froze. Slowly, she turned around, and Iwaizumi had a good look at her face.

What a pretty face it was.

"I'm sorry!" the girl yelped, and she bowed from the waist in apology. "I didn't mean to trespass, I got lost and â€" I suddenly got here and I decided to take a look at the volleyball court â€"

"It's all right," Iwaizumi answered, "although because it's our festival today, you won't get to see the court at all."

"Is that soâ€|?" the girl dropped her head in disappointment. "And I thought I'll get to see the court againâ€|"

"You've been here before?" Iwaizumi asked. He doesn't remember seeing the pretty girl in the gym at all, and it bothered him a bit. The girl, with her petite figure and hair the color of the sunshine, surely stood out. If she ever came in the gym, everyone would notice right away.

**Especiallly that Trashykawaâ€|**

"By the way, have you seen a guy around here?" Iwaizumi said. "He's tall â€" and good-looking according to the standards of women nowadays."

"Tall and good-looking?" the girl seemed to know who Oikawa was, based on the awkward smile on her face. "Noâ€|I haven't seen any guy since I came here."

"Oh." Iwaizumi scratched his head in frustration. "Where could that guy be?"

"Excuse me, but upon running here, I lost track of my friends," the girl said. "I think I should go find themâ€|"

"Do you need help?" Iwaizumi asked. In his mind he was slapping himself for speaking.

The girl stared at him, making him feel uneasy. "Aren't you looking for somebody else?"

Iwaizumi stiffened. Truth be told, he had no idea why he had offered help all of a sudden. "I â€" well â€" I'm just thinking that you might get lost againâ€|"

"Yeah, that makes sense," the girl replied.

"Huh?" Iwaizumi blinked.

"You're right." the girl smiled at him. "Maybe we should help each other in searching for our friends."

"Iâ€|weâ€|yeah." Iwaizumi could not give any response. _**That's**_ how bad he is with girls.

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The way Kageyama had seen it, Hinata had been frightened by the fact that she was being asked to appear in front of hundreds of people as the prettiest girl in Seijoh. He may not know what it feels like to be a dude in a girl's body, but he knew to himself that he would also run away if he were in the gingehead's shoes.

"Hinata! Where could that idiot be?" Kageyama and Nishinoya parted ways to look for shorty middle blocker.

The raven-haired setter entered the school building to search for the ginger head. He walked past classrooms which were turned into cosplay cafes, Chinese restaurants, or fairy tale theatres. He even ran into a group of guys wearing maid costumes, and a pair of girls dressed as animal mascots. Running up and down many floors, Kageyama soon got tired of looking for Hinata and took a break.

He sat at the steps of a stairway and took out his phone to call Nishinoya.

"Have you seen Shouyou?" was the first thing Nishinoya had said the moment he answered the call.

Kageyama heaved an exhausted sigh. The libero himself had not found Hinata yet. "No. I can't believe that dumbass would suddenly get lostâ€|"

"Well, it's Shouyou. 'Probably freaked out when asked to make an appearance in front of so many people."

"I just hope she won't get into any trouble. I'm gonna check the comfort rooms."

"That's a good idea. You know how she always gets those stomachaches when she feels nervous." Nishinoya chuckled. "See you later."

Kageyama put his phone back into the pocket of his pants. He then stood up, and was ready to go downstairs when he saw the last person he wanted to see in Seijoh.

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Oikawa had been running all around the school like a madman. The moment he noticed the hint of sunset hair among the huge crowd of people, he dashed out of the volleyball team's food stall and searched for her.

He just knew he would see her again, and voilà! Little Miss Right appears right in his turf.

There's no way Oikawa's gonna let this chance pass by.

He knew Iwaizumi was going to kill him for leaving without permission, but to Oikawa getting beaten, mauled, drowned, or whatever method it was that Iwaizumi will use to execute him will be worth it if he finds out who she was.

Now, all he has to do is find her.

He half-jogged down the hallways in the school building, taking a peek at every room that was open. Some girls tried to stop him and drag him into the booths they were working at, but there would be no stopping Oikawa Tooru that day.

Save the person whom he ran into at the stairway.

"Tobio-chan?" Oikawa arched his eyebrows at his ex-underclassman, who stood frozen on the upper landing of the stairs.

"O-oikawa-san!" Kageyama looked pale. It wasn't as if they had a bad relationship in middle school, yet the raven-haired setter had a nervous expression on his face, as if he did not want to encounter Oikawa at all.

Despite noticing this, Oikawa gave the younger boy a welcoming smile. "How nice of you to visit me."

"Uh...yeah..." Kageyama stammered. He was clearly at loss for words.

"Now that you're here, would you like to help me search for someone? This is urgent."

"Someone..." Kageyama raised an eyebrow in hesitation.

"Yeah," Oikawa said. "I've been looking for a very cute girl, who has sunset-colored hair. Come to think of it, she looks like a smaller version of Chibi-chan."

"Chibi-chan?" Kageyama was baffled for a moment. Then, as if he had recalled a horrifying revelation, his body stiffened, and suddenly looked pale.

Oikawa tilted his head to one side. "Are you all right, Tobio-chan?"

"I... I haven't seen a girl like that!" Kageyama blurted out. "Excuse me...I gotta go." He began to walk downstairs past his ex-senpai, recklessly taking two steps at a time.

Oikawa eyed him for a moment, until his ex-kouhai had his back facing him.

"You're not a good liar, Tobio-chan!" Oikawa murmured. Slowly, he walked downstairs, and stealthily followed Kageyama.

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Oh. Cliffhanger. Advance Happy New Year to you all!

Okay, I don't know if Iwaizumi can cook, but let's just assume that he can. Anyway, I hope you like the festival of chaos.

Review?

18. Chapter 18

notginnyweasley: Yeah, I actually want Oikawa to have this hilarious sulky mood whenever Hinata 's attention goes to Iwaizumi. It'll be funny!

aya-.-desu: I'm glad you like the chaos! But the fun is yet to start!

NyanKitties: fem!Koganei is so shocking I don't even know where to start.

Kria: Indeed, Kageyama made the situation worse! But I think it's all because he got scared when the worst case scenario had happened to him so unexpectedly.

DemiseSurvive: I'll start writing the KnB x HQ right away. I'll be uploading a "Prototype Chapter", because I'm now planning to simply write multiple short stories of HQ x KnB crack pairings " hey, I'll make readers request their ship!

Blubber: You're welcome! Now you're shipping IwaHina too? XD

SunsetChan guest: Well, thank YOU for the idea. And Happy Birthday, by the way. Sorry for the late greeting. Happy New Year to you, too. Sorry because that was also late.

THE Great Rainbow King: Iwa-chan kinda reminds me of Kasamatsu-chan in so many ways, so I somehow made their personalities similar when it comes to dealing with girls.

Female President Cocoa-sensei: *catches the laptop* Yes, yes, cliffhangers are cruel. *nods

Tina Vainamoinen: Something's about to go down, all right! XD

****Lunary:** Nope, the cats aren't joining the fun in Seijoh. But maybe in Karasuno next time? XD**

****Gwen1Stacy:** Surely Oikawa can handle heartache if that happensâ€|.**

****Itachisgurl93:** UshiHinaâ€|I've gotta be honest, I'm not sure if I can still squeeze UshiHina in this fic, as I'm still planning on other ships such as NoyaHina and LevHina and even BokuHina, but I will try my best!**

****WhYAreOrangesIcky:** I get called "senpai" a lot, as well as Author-sama, but Ao-chan is fine! And I don't know, really, I mean, I've never been called FairyGodFanficAuthor beforeâ€|**

****Ssspooky:** Yeah, let's make Iwaizumi a good cook! Nobody is going to prove us wrong anyway! .**

****Lotus Sword:** Yeah, I kinda have that mindset too, to have as many ships as there is in a Spanish Armada (tho the Englishmen sunk many of those)**

****EminaRukiAx:** Wow, you're quick to make a review! XD Indeed, Iwaizumi and Kasamatsu are birds of the same feather.**

****AnimeLoverMars:** Yeah, Tobio-chan can't lie to save his life, unfortunately. XDD**

****Everyone else:** Hey, if I didn't turn the last chapter into a cliffhanger, what would I be writing on New Year's Eve?**

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 18: Mister Misinterpreted (Part 1)****

A lot of people see Iwaizumi Hajime as a pretty cool guy, mostly because he's probably the only person who can beat the crap out of the Great King Oikawa Tooru. But more than that, he had a strong personality and a sensible outlook towards certain matters, traits which have been of great help not only to him but to Oikawa and the rest of the team as well.

Then again, cool as he may be, Iwaizumi was never really good when it comes to talking to girls. Of course, casual, platonic conversations with the opposite sex was fine with Iwaizumi, but there are times when a certain kind of girl would make his mind blank, his tongue tied, and his heart race MACH 3 fast.

That's exactly what was going on with him upon meeting the female Hinata during the school festival in Aoba Josai.

Normally, or at least in typical teenage shoujo manga love stories,

certain incidents would start a connection between the girl and the boy. But the thing between Iwaizumi and the lovely little gingerhead was rather " for a lack of a better word " awkward. They have been together for more than an hour, walking all around the school in search of their friends, yet neither of them said a word to each other. Apparently Iwaizumi (who had no idea that the girl beside him was actually the freak-quick partner of his former underclassman Kageyama) was too nervous to start a conversation. He could not even look at her in the eye, scared as he was that she might misinterpret even the smallest of his movements.

Hinata, on the other hand, was quiet because she was too engrossed in searching for Kageyama and Nishinoya. Hence she barely had a moment to say anything to Iwaizumi, whom she could not remember as an opponent in volleyball more than once before.

"I wonder where your buddy is," Hinata muttered. Iwaizumi stiffened in nervousness when he realized that she has been talking to him.

"I have no idea," Iwaizumi spoke, his voice barely audible. "That guy's usually easy to find, what with all the fangirls swarming around him."

Hinata glanced at him. "Is your friend popular?"

"He's **annoyingly** popular," Iwaizumi grunted, getting pissed at remembering Oikawa's face. "It wouldn't be bad if he's popular because he's good in volleyball, but to be cheered on by a lot of girls just because he's handsome? It irritates me sometimes."

The girl giggled softly in delight, and it flustered the wing spiker of Seijoh.

"What's funny?" Iwaizumi asked. He felt like dying of embarrassment.

"You seem to know him for so long," Hinata said. "You find him annoying and yet you're here now looking for him. He must be a nice guy to have such a buddy worrying about him."

Iwaizumi glanced away from her, abashed. "He has an irritating personality but he means well. And the only thing he wants aside from winning against Shiratorizawa is that he finally finds the right girl for him."

"The right girl?"

"He has met this 'cute girl' in the shopping district close to my home," Iwaizumi explained reluctantly. "And he believes that he's met the girl of his dreams. He even keeps the necklace that the girl has dropped, believing that she will come back to get it someday."

Shopping district necklace? Hinata froze. **Could it be**

"Iwaizumi-san!"

Both Hinata and Iwaizumi turned around to see Kindaichi running

towards their direction.

Turnip-head!**** Hinata quickly made an effort to hide her face using her shoulder bag. Kindaichi walked over to Iwaizumi, but spared a curious glance at her.

"Kaındaichi," Iwaizumi said. "Have you seen Oikawa?"

Kindaichi shook his head. "We're in need of people in the takoyaki stall. You have to come back and resume cooking."

"Is that so?" Iwaizumi frowned. "But I " he stared at Hinata, who suddenly liked to look elsewhere but at his direction.

"I-it's fine!" Hinata spoke, her voice muffled by her bag. "I can handle myself! D-d-don't worry!"

Iwaizumi looked concerned. He could not bear to leave the girl; she had been lost once, after all. "Are you sure?"

"I'll be fine!" Hinata managed to give a nervous laugh. "Go on, your friends are waiting."

"If you say so," Iwaizumi said in a reluctant tone, before turning to leave with Kindaichi. Hinata watched him walk away before heading to the opposite direction, going back to searching for Kageyama and Nishinoya.

"Iwaizumi-san," Kindaichi said as he looked over his shoulder at the retreating figure of the gingerhead. He found her familiar, but he had no idea if they've met. He had decided to brush the idea off his mind, and glanced at his senpai. "Who's that girl?"

"Crap." Iwaizumi swore under his breath. "I forgot to ask her name." Part of him felt like going back to ask the girl, but shyness had urged him to choose another priority: to help out in the takoyaki stand he had just left.

Kindaichi was surprised at his senior's forgetfulness. He could not recall Iwaizumi being bad with names.

"It's my first time to see Iwaizumi-san together with a girl," he said. "I wonder do you like her, Iwaizumi-san?"

There was a conflict of emotions in Iwaizumi's face, a cross between annoyed and dreamy. "Why would you ask me that stupid question? I'm not Oikawa."

"S-sorry! I didn't mean to pry into your personal life, Iwaizumi-san!" Kindaichi apologized right away.

Iwaizumi huffed, pretending to be irritated at the question. Well, he was irritated, because he had no idea how to answer it.

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Kageyama had no idea where he was going to go at that time, but one thing's for sure: he must find Hinata before Oikawa does, or the crows of Karasuno are going to be screwed.

**I knew this fortune-telling shit's a bad idea,** Kageyama thought in frustration. He was walking down the corridor with an expression on his face that was so grim it had ruined his supposedly good looks. He had a single agenda in mind, and that is to find Hinata and get her out of Seijoh right away.

Oikawa, on the other hand, was trying hard to become as sneaky as a ninja while following his ex-kouhai Kageyama. He had no idea how he had come up with his hunch, but he had a feeling that Kageyama knew where his beloved Sunset-chan was.

"What are you hiding, Tobio-chan?" Oikawa was hiding behind a dinosaur cut-out, eyeing Kageyama as the raven-haired setter walked around frantically, obviously searching for someone. Oikawa believed that it was Sunset-chan whom Kageyama was looking for. How his former underclassman knew of the girl, he had no idea, nor was he interested to find out. He just hoped that the girl's connection to Kageyama was not deep.

**Have faith in your good looks, Oikawa. Tobio-chan may be a more talented setter than you are, but you're the real ladies' man.** He tried to cheer himself up.

Kageyama seemed to sense someone following him, and he quickened his pace. Oikawa silently stalked after him, not giving up. There was no way he would give up, if it's Sunset-chan that was at stake.

"Oikawa-san."

Oikawa almost jumped in surprise when a quiet voice spoke from behind him. He had no choice but to turn around, and smile awkwardly at his kouhai Kunimi.

"Everyone's been looking for you," Kunimi told Oikawa in a level tone. "Iwaizumi-sanâ€|he swore to hang you in public."

**Iwa-chan?!** Oikawa shuddered in fear. He was truly horror-struck; he had forgotten how deadly the wing spiker was when utterly pissed. Iwaizumi was probably plotting his death by now.

"Um, Kunimi-chanâ€|" Oikawa scratched his head sheepishly. "How about you just let me go and tell Iwa-chan you haven't seen me?"

Kunimi frowned; he clearly disliked covering for his captain. "Butâ€|"

"If you do me a favor, I will owe you one, Kunimi-chan." Oikawa flashed his most charismatic of smiles.

"Iâ€|" Kunimi took a moment to think about it. In the end, he complied with a sigh. "Alright, fine."

"Thank you, Kunimi-chan! Nowâ€¦" Oikawa turned around, only to find Kageyama gone. "Eh? Where did my former underclassman go?"

"Former underclassman?" Kunimi gave the captain a baffled look.

"Ah, just go back to the takoyaki stand and pretend that you didn't find me." Oikawa waved him away and went on to find Kageyama.

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Nishinoya wandered through the crowd, hoping to see even a hint of sunfire-colored hair. Hinata was the only one he's been thinking about, nobody else. And if you think that thinking about only one person and nothing else causes fewer headaches, you're dead wrong.

Just the thought of Hinata getting in trouble, or hurt in an accident, it caused more than headaches to the Guardian Deity of Karasuno. He would probably have heart attacks five to ten years from now.

"Darn it," Nishinoya glared at the phone. For some reason he could not contact Hinata, and apparently neither could he keep in touch with Kageyama. Hence he had no choice but to look around, keeping a low profile just in case the volleyboys of Seijoh were around. It wasn't as if he was thinking that the guys would eat him alive if they see him, but it's better to have less people find out about the female Hinata.

"Aren't you the libero of Karasuno?"

Nishinoya froze. He knew that voice, having heard it once in the crows' match against Aoba Josai. He tried to keep himself cool, and then turned around to meet Iwaizumi, who was with Kindaichi.

"What's he doing here?" Kindaichi wondered. He narrowed his eyes at the shorter guy. "Is Kageyama with you?"

Nishinoya sighed. _**No use lying to these guys,**_ he thought.

"Yeah, he's with me a while ago," he told them. "Unfortunately I lost them. And I'm trying to find them right now."

"Them?" Iwaizumi raised an eyebrow. "Kageyama and who else?"

**Crap,** Nishinoya thought. Beads of sweat began to appear on his forehead.

"The shrimp must be around here, too." Kindaichi glanced about, searching for the freak duo.

"I â€¦ I need to goâ€¦" Nishinoya said. He quickly turned around and walked away from the two guys.

"What's wrong with that guy?" Kindaichi wondered.

Iwaizumi shrugged at him in reply. "I have no idea. Let's just go back to our booth."

"R-right!"

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Kageyama climbed upstairs again, successfully hiding from Oikawa's plain sight. He had felt his former senpai following him a while ago, and he made sure the other guy wouldn't notice that he knew it.

The raven-haired setter sought refuge in one of the empty rooms facing the front of the school grounds. He let out a breath he hadn't realized he'd been holding. He took his phone out, and frowned when he found out that it ran out of battery.

"Damn," Kageyama grunted as he slid the phone back into the pocket of his jeans. "Now I can't contact Noya-san and that airhead."

"You're talking about that strange friend of yours, are you not?"

Kageyama almost jumped; shocked to hear another voice when he thought he was all alone in that room.

"Who's there?" he almost yelled, scared as he was that it was a ghost which had spoken to him.

"Calm down, young man. I'm no ghost." The source of the voice, hidden within the darkness of the room despite the bright day, was quite human. Kageyama composed himself, peering around to find the mysterious person who was with him.

"Who are you?" he asked once again. The voice â€" a soft, feminine voice, answered.

"I know you've come for me. And behold, Fate has brought you here herself."

"Huh?" Kageyama apparently was too dull to understand such stuff.

The voice chuckled again. "Ah, forgive me. You're not the brightest crayon in the box, after all. I am the fortune teller sent by the Oha-Asa company."

Kageyama's eyes widened. "Are you really? Why don't you show yourself?"

"Do I have to? Are you in need of proof? Isn't the fact that I know your friend's condition enough to prove my power?"

**He knows about Hinata?** Kageyama was incredulous. This fortune

teller has something.

"Yes, I know that your friend hasâ€|changed, in a way. And you're here to ask me why," the voice said.

"More like, we're here to ask for a solution," Kageyama answered.

"Is that the true reason why you're here? Aren't you happy to have her as she is right now?" the voice spoke cynically.

"Don't mess with me. Tell me the solution, if you even know it."

"The solution is so simple, really." The voice said with an air of superiority which pissed the raven-haired setter. "It is just a matter of who wants to return, and who wants to remain."

"Huh?" Kageyama had had enough of idioms and hard-to-understand sentences. "Stop messing with me! What are you talking about?"

There was no more response after that.

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"Damn, I'm so hungryâ€|" Hinata held onto her stomach as she walked down the line of food stalls. She wanted to stop by and have something to eat, but she wanted to find Kageyama and Nishinoya first. Moreover, she was scared that one of the members of Seijoh's Student Council would see her and drag her to that special show they've set up for everyone. Hinata liked the idea of appearing in front of everyone as a superstar, but she didn't want to be a female idol.

"Where could they be?" she looked left and right, hoping to see a hint of raven-hair or a mid-lane of blonde dye. She had been in this school before, how come she still felt so lost?

"You again?"

Hinata stared at the direction of the voice, only to see Iwaizumi, along with some of the regulars of Seijoh's volleyball team. The guy was just as surprised as she was, and Hinata â€" she had no idea what to react, really.

"H-hiâ€|" Hinata smiled awkwardly.

"H-hi to you too," Iwaizumi said.

**He's blushing,** Hinata thought. _**Maybe he was ashamed because I saw him wearing an apron and cooking?**_

"Whyâ€|do youâ€|are you hungry?" Iwaizumi asked, stammering the words.

Hinata bit her lip, downright tempted when she saw the sumptuous

looking octopus balls on the grill. Her stomach was on a stage of a massive revolution, and she won't last any longer if she held back.

"Can I have some?" she asked sheepishly.

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"That girl looks familiar," Kindaichi murmured suspiciously.

"Who?" Kunimi asked. "The girl Iwaizumi-san's talking to?"

"Yeahâ€¦I'm wondering where I'd seen her beforeâ€¦"

The two freshmen watched Iwaizumi hand over a small box of takoyaki to Hinata, who gladly received it.

"You don't have to pay for that," Iwaizumi said, glancing away from the girl's lovely brown eyes.

"Seriously?" Hinata's face brightened up. "Thanks!"

"M-maybe you should take a seatâ€¦there's a bench nearby." Iwaizumi suddenly remembered he had work to do. He then felt a hand pat his shoulder.

"Go on, take a break." The hand was Matsukawa's. "We can handle this."

"Are you sure?" Iwaizumi said.

Hanamaki lightly slapped the wing spiker's back, as if to encourage him. "We're fine here."

Iwaizumi, already being forced to leave the takoyaki stall, accompanied Hinata to the nearby bench and have lunch.

"This is good!" Hinata said, gracelessly munching on the takoyaki while sitting with the stiff-and-panicking Iwaizumi. "You made these?"

"Y-yeahâ€¦" Iwaizumi answered shyly. Few people complimented his cooking skills.

"You want some?"

"N-no, I'veâ€¦I'm full."

"Eh? But weren't you working all day?" Hinata tilted her head to one side.

"I'm fine," Iwaizumi said. "By the wayâ€¦I haven't known your name yet."

Hinata eyed him for a long time, making him feel really

uneasy.

"It's fine if you don't tell me!" Iwaizumi waved his hands to say that it was okay.

"Hinata Shouko," Hinata told him.

"Shouko?" Hinata Shouko? Iwaizumi was mildly surprised. "Are you related to Hinata Shoyo?"

Hinata nodded. "We're cousins, you see."

"Oh." Iwaizumi could not believe the coincidence. "It's a small world. I've played with his team, you know?"

I know, Hinata thought with a smile.

"Quite a freaky guy. Have you seen him jump?" There was admiration in Iwaizumi's voice as he talked about Hinata when playing volleyball. "And I'm amazed at what he had done to Kageyama!"

"What did he do?" Hinata asked, alarmed. She had no idea she'd done something to the raven-haired setter; if she did, and it was something wrong, then he'd probably kill her.

"He changed Kageyama," Iwaizumi said while smiling. "The entire Karasuno did. And it was good."

"Oh." It was all Hinata could say. She never thought Karasuno had done something good to Kageyama. She did notice him change a time passed by, but she never realized!

"IWA-CHAAAAN!"

__**Crap,**_ Hinata thought. __**That voice sounded familiar!**__

"Huh?" Iwaizumi looked around to see where the yelling was coming from, only to find out that it was heading his way.

"Iwa-chan, you traitor!" Oikawa wailed like a kid. "How could you hit on my Sunset-chan?"

__**Sunset-chan?**__ Hinata was flustered, scared, and everything else in between.

"HUH?!" Iwaizumi had an incredulous look on his face.

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I'm so sorry it took long! I haven't had time to write stories recently.

**Have you read my TsukkiYama fic? I got inspired by Coldplay.
:3**

****Oh, and I wrote a teaser trailer of Abracadabra's sequelâ€¦a promise that I will finish this fic before 2015 ends.****

****Enjoy!****

19. Chapter 19

****volleybaka921: I'm actually trying to learn speaking Japanese on my own, though I'm making little progress on it. Did I really seem fluent in it? XD****

****Chiisaiuki: Yeah, the shit-storm begins!****

****notginnyweasley: I can't say anything about your wish tho, I mean, I can't spoil my own storyâ€¦XD****

****GwenlStacy: Hahaha, I made things sound more complicated for a purpose!****

****Dark-riza: De nada, amiga. Habla usted Ingles? Me habla no poder Espa****Ã±****ol. ****

****Tina Vainamoinen: Tina! You're the first to read the sequel of Abracadabra! How do you like it?****

**** : Yes, that pretty much sums up everything. Everyone loves Hinata. Who doesn't, anyway?****

****Guest: I never thought anyone would support me like this. Thank you very much, it's because of you nice people that I never get tired of writing.****

****Everyone else: I've posted my first KnB x HQ crossover. It's entitled "Magnet", a collection of crack ships that may sink or sailâ€¦I've started with Aone x fem!Koganei (yeah, NyanKitties, I heard your plea) and I'm done writing my Kuroo x fem!Midorima, so I hope you send your requests after that!****

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 19: Mr. Misinterpreted (Part 2)****

Hinata had seen Oikawa Tooru many times, and she had almost all of his different personalities: the cool side, the creepy volleyball player side, the "I'm-Kageyama's-former-senpai" side, and so on.

Seeing Oikawa's ****slightly stupid**** side was unexpected, nonetheless.

****What's he talking about?**** Hinata thought as he watched Seijoh's

captain run frantically towards them. She had never seen Oikawa look so anxious about something else other than volleyball before.

"Such a headache," muttered Iwaizumi. He then turned towards Hinata. "Sorry, but I think I must leave you here for now."

"It's fine." Hinata smiled at him. "Thanks for the food, by the way."

Iwaizumi looked as if he was about to say something else, but he simply nodded and then walked over to meet Oikawa head-on.

"Trashykawaâ€|" There were networks of veins popped all over the wing spiker's face.

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Iwaizumi could not believe what was coming out of Oikawa Tooru's annoying mouth. Did the bastard just call him a traitor? And to think Oikawa was the one who had abandoned the team while they were all busy with their food business!

"How dare you yell at me after abandoning the team's business you ASSYKAWAAAAA!" Iwaizumi met Oikawa's face with one heavy fist. Just imagine Seijoh's setter flying a few good meters away, cartoon-style.

"Ouch," Oikawa sat up from the ground, rubbing his cheek gingerly. He glared at Iwaizumi, though it rather looked like a childish expression of annoyance, with the pout and whimpering.

"Where the hell have you been you idiot?" Iwaizumi asked â€" though it sounded more like an angry yell.

"So mean!" Oikawa whined. "You're the one who owe me an explanation!"

"I don't owe you anything!" Iwaizumi grabbed Oikawa by the collar of his shirt and dragged him back to the food stall.

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Banned from seeing the commotion between the two seniors of Aoba Josai, Hinata had no choice but to go back to searching for Kageyama and Nishinoya.

"What was that all about?" Hinata whined. She could not understand Oikawa's behavior â€" well, misbehavior at that time. Oikawa has established a reputation of being so popular (among girls and volleyball players) for being cool. Hinata already had an suspicions that the guy can act stupid sometimes, but she did not expect it to

be like this. "Creepy."

"Oooooi! Hinata!"

Hinata froze, and turned around to find Nishinoya waving frantically in her direction. Relief flooded the gingerhead as she ran towards her senpai.

"Noya-saaaaan!" Hinata wailed while blinking tears of joy.

"Hinata!" Nishinoya grinned. "Just where have you been all this time?"

"I ran away from the Council and before I knew it, I got lost."

"Lost is an understatement, you know? I've been worried about you." there was loneliness in the Guardian Deity's voice when he spoke.

Hinata scratched her head sheepishly. "Sorry."

"Well, then." Noya sighed. "You got me all tired looking for you. Let's go get some ice pops!"

"Okay!"

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Kageyama, all flustered and absent minded, had to sit somewhere just to gather his thoughts. The mysterious fortune teller "Kageyama still doubted she was an actual agent of Oha-Asa" told some very weird things regarding Hinata. They were so weird that Kageyama had no idea what they meant, if they even had a meaning at all.

It's a matter of who wants to change and who wants to remain. What's that supposed to mean? Was it somebody's fault that Hinata has changed? Why would anyone want Hinata to become a girl?_

It was the most confusing thing, for anyone to wish Hinata to become a girl. Kageyama wondered if the gingerhead had some enemies who hated her enough to wish for her misfortune.

Kageyama frowned. He surely admits that he was never the smart kind of guy. Thus he hated it when people talk so philosophically to him. Maybe that was why he never believed in fortune tellers. They generally shroud their premonitions with riddles, after all.

"Why didn't she just make it easy for us?" Kageyama shouted to no one in particular. His loud, angry look earned him silence, plus a frightened look from everyone around him. Kageyama looked at them in return, swallowing his saliva out of nervousness. He quickly got up and walked away, face red with embarrassment.

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There was a commotion going on at the takoyaki food stall. Tension between Oikawa and Iwaizumi had risen, that even the rest of the volleyball team could not help but get worried. It had been natural to see Iwaizumi hit Oikawa when he gets annoyed, but the thing was that it was Oikawa who seemed to have a problem â€" he was ignoring his most trusted spiker.

"What's with those two?" Hanamaki whispered to Matsukawa. "Oikawa's not talking to Iwaizumi at all."

Matsukawa shrugged. "I have no idea. Oikawa's been like that since Iwaizumi dragged him back here."

"I wonder what happenedâ€|"

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"Oi, Trashykawa," Iwaizumi said, trying to keep his voice indifferent. He did notice that Oikawa was not talking to him. He tried to brush it off, hoping that Oikawa would soon realize that he and the girl 'Sunset-chan', as Seijoh's captain referred to her, were not dating. "That sulking of yours is pissing me off."

"Hmp." Oikawa stubbornly glanced away from the other guy. Iwaizumi took a deep breath as he tried to control himself. He wanted to keep himself from punching the guy straight in that handsome face of his.

"The heck are you sulking about?! I have no time for this, Oikawa. Get to work."

"Stop pretending you don't know what's going on." Oikawa muttered with a childish pout as he averted his gaze.

"Huh?" networks of veins popped on Iwaizumi's forehead. He can't believe Oikawa could become this stupid. "What're you babbling about?"

Still pouting, Oikawa ignored him and went back to pleasing the female customers.

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The two little crows (Hinata and Noya, not that I think you don't know who I'm talking about) took a walk down the long avenue lined with food stalls while eating ice pops. Hinata enjoyed moments like this, when there was nothing but silence while enjoying a snack. Albeit in reality they were walking around in search of Kageyama.

"I wonder where Kageyama have gone!" Hinata muttered with slight concern in her voice. "Maybe he went home already?"

"I doubt it," Nishinoya answered. "He should've called us, at least. Besides, he's been looking for you as well."

Hinata realized that since she made Kageyama walk around the school for hours in search of her, the raven-haired setter was probably very pissed at her by now. The gingerhead could not help but shudder. "He's gonna kill me for disappearing all of a sudden!"

Nishinoya laughed. "Let's hope that he won't! But if he gets angry, don't worry " I'll take care of you!"

Hinata smiled, somehow relieved by her senior's words. "I'll call you Noya-senpai for the rest of my life if that happens."

It was as if by cue that they saw Kageyama walking towards their direction, his mouth a firm slash of seriousness which scared Hinata.

"K-kageyama!" Hinata froze in fear as the raven-haired setter approached them.

"Why haven't you called?" Nishinoya asked. "I've been trying to contact you."

"Sorry." Kageyama apologized, much to their surprise. "Let's go home."

"Eh?" Hinata got puzzled. "Why? What about the fortune teller?"

"We shouldn't stick around here for too long." Kageyama began to head for the exit. Hinata and Nishinoya glanced at each other, both baffled by the setter's behavior. They quickly followed him behind afterwards.

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"Fortune teller?" Kenma asked from the other end of the line.

"Uh-huh." Hinata was on her bed, lying on her back and cuddling the stuffed toy she got from Nekoma.

"Why a fortune teller, of all things?"

"Because," Hinata said. "Magic can only be solved by magic. Or so they say."

"That makes sense, but" Nekoma's setter sounded skeptical, but Hinata knew he could not help but do so. "Haven't you tried to consult a doctor first? I mean, there are some possible medical explanations. I'm not telling that you might be sick, but science can explain a lot of things nowadays."

"Doctor? I doubt any doctor can explain what has happened to me," Hinata replied. "I know you're only suggesting for my own good, but I don't think science can help me right now."

"If you say soâ€¦" Kenma did not press any further, being the good phone buddy he was. "I gotta get up early for tomorrow, Shouyou. Bye."

"Bye." Hinata waited until Kenma dropped the line. She put the phone down, and was about to go to sleep herself, when the phone rang again.

"Have you forgotten to say anything?" Hinata asked, thinking that the caller was Kenma.

"Have I? Am I supposed to say I missed you or something?" Kuroo spoke on the other end of the line.

"Kuro-chan?" Hinata sat up, surprised.

"Have you been talking to Kenma?" Kuroo asked. "I hoped he didn't warn you again."

Hinata could not help but laugh. "It's not like it prevented you from contacting me, anyway."

"Kenma knows he can't keep me out for long. But Sho-chan, I think it'll be better if he knows nothing about this," Kuroo said. Hinata could imagine the bed-haired captain smiling slyly for some reason.

"Why?" Hinata asked, puzzled. There was no point in not telling Kenma, is there?

"It's more fun this way," Kuroo replied. "It's like hiding an affair."

"Affair? You're talking weirdly tonight."

Kuroo suddenly laughed. "I'd thought you'd say that, you know? I'm trying to say funny things to you, you see. By the way, I called because of the second training camp we're about to have."

"Second training camp?" Hinata almost jumped in excitement. "Cool! Do the coach and the captain know about this?"

"I think your coach already knew about this and he'll announce it to you anytime soon, but I'd like to tell you myself," Kuroo said. "The second training camp is to be held at an island at the south. The crows are invited to train with us, and I was hoping you could come along."

"Oh." Hinata paused for a moment. She was invited as herself, but the entire City Boy Alliance would surely be hoping that they will see Hinata Shouyou at the next training camp. "Iâ€¦I'm not sure if Shouyou shall come, so I can't sayâ€¦"

"Is that so?" Hinata noticed a hint of disappointment in the captain's voice. "Something to do with the elder Ukai?"

"Right."

"I guess it can't be helped." Kuroo heaved a sigh. "I still hope you come. It'll be fun."

"Yeah." Hinata spoke in a weak voice.

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Iwaizumi was beginning to get bothered by Oikawa's misbehavior. Surely the sulky and childish temperament shall wane soon? But no, the setter of Seijoh still would not talk to him the way he used to, unless it had something to do with volleyball. Iwaizumi almost missed the annoying Oikawa Tooru. Almost. The wing spiker would never admit such blasphemy. If he did, his pride would be damaged, severed, and crushed into tiny, irreparable pieces. Iwaizumi would rather play volleyball naked " in front of an all girls' school.

"Oikawa," Iwaizumi said. "Talk to me."

Oikawa got up from his futon, pouting. "What are we going to talk about?"

"Don't pretend like you haven't been ignoring me today." Iwaizumi gritted his teeth in frustration. He really felt like hitting the guy in the face, but he held back.

"Hmp." Oikawa glanced away like an offended kid. "I'm not pretending at all, Iwa-chan."

Iwaizumi was somehow relieved that Oikawa had called him 'Iwa-chan'; it was a sign that the setter hasn't thrown their friendship just yet.

"You're trying to take Sunset-chan away from me," Oikawa added.

"What?!" Iwaizumi yelled in disbelief. "What the hell are you talking about?"

Oikawa narrowed his eyes at him. "I've been searching for her, you know. Iwa-chan, how could you?"

"What " I did not " " Iwaizumi scratched his head in frustration. He could believe he was being accused of breaking the bro code (for some reason they do have one) by Oikawa. "You can't be serious! I barely know the girl! You think I'm hitting on her?!"

Oikawa's facial expression gave him an answer.

"Christ, Oikawa, you've gotta be kidding!" Iwaizumi groaned. He could not believe that this was really happening to him. It all happened because he helped a cute girl find her friends and get something to eat.

Oikawa laid himself on the futon, getting ready to sleep.

"Oi! We're still talking, Trashykawa â€" Oikawa!" Iwaizumi raised his voice, panicking already. "Look, we're not dating! We just met at the festival! There's no way I can get that girl, not if you're my opponent anywayâ€|" it was true, since Iwaizumi always thought of Oikawa as way better at dealing with girls than he was.

Oikawa did not respond, though Iwaizumi was pretty sure the guy was only pretending to be asleep.

"What, do you want me to prove it to you?" Iwaizumi blurted out. "Do you want me to go to Karasuno and ask her to go out with you?"

Iwaizumi thought he saw Oikawa's ears perked up.

"Karasuno?" Oikawa asked, without turning around to face him. "She's studying at Tobio-chan's school?"

"I assume she does," Iwaizumi replied. "She said she's Hinata Shouyou's cousin."

"Chibi-chan?" Oikawa quickly got up.

"Yeah," Iwaizumi nodded. "And I saw Karasuno's libero at the festival, by the way. I think he went to the festival with the rest of his team, and they brought the girl along."

Oikawa frowned thoughtfully. He had seen Kageyama at the school festival as well. If the girl was Chibi-chan's cousin, then chances are she was known by Karasuno's volleyball team.

"Iwa-chan," Oikawa spoke. "You said you want to prove your sincerity as my friend, right?"

Iwaizumi eyed the other boy suspiciously. His gut instinct was telling him that something was wrong. "I did not say it that wayâ€|"

Oikawa smiled at him, in his usually charming but meaningful manner. "Would you do me a favor?"

Iwaizumi gulped. He had a really bad feeling about this.

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****DEM CLIFFHANGER.****

****Oh, sorry this took so long! My internship's taking over much of my sched (plus the thesis and exams and the graduation preparation), gomen. It'll probably take me a while before I update again. I was supposed to update around January 31 (Kuroko's birthday) but things have gone awry and I have to finish schoolwork before I can finally concentrate on this. ****

****Btw who's gonna join NanoWrimo this year? I wanna submit this, but I feel like writing a non-fanfic workâ€|****

****Oh, btw have you read my crossover yet? Would you like to request any KnB x HQ ship? XD****

20. Chapter 20

****Tina Vainamonen: Thank you! Oh, and I'm sorry you had to do some stress eating, it's just that I have to keep you folks hanging for a while.****

****Lotus Sword: Yep. Apparently Oikawa's up to something. Nasty? Funny? Downright crazy? Who can tell, really?****

****rhead-a-holyc: This is my first try at NaNoWrimo, so I haven't decided just yet.****

****Fudge-Cakess: I'm glad to help you enjoy the best 5 minutes of your life :3****

****Lunary: Oh? Who can say what Noya's gonna do?****

****EminaRukiAx: Akashi x Kageyama? Sure. Though it might take me a while, now that I'm preparing for graduationâ€|btw thanks for understanding my situation****

****Blubber: NaNoWrimo is a writing contest, wherein if your work gets chosen they will actually publish a copy just for you. They're allowing fanfic entries this year, that's why I'm trying my best to finish Abracadabra as soon as possible!****

****GwenlStacy: Calm down, girl! I'm just halfway with my fic! There are more TsukkiHina moments to come!****

****Awesome Coco-Puff: Long time no see, Coco! Where's my Sugamama fic update?****

****Everyone else: Heh. What's with all these assumptions about Noya-senpai?XDD****

****Hiyaaa! I'm happy you still spend time reading my fic. I'm in a bind, really, our thesis passed (tho I'm pretty sure we won't get an excellent grade, not with that demonic statistician of a professor anyway) yet we still have a lot of stuff to do, but I'm working hard for this! ****

****Writing is my vice, after all.****

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 20: Hopes are High****

Iwaizumi has learned a lesson that night: never ever promise Oikawa Tooru that you will do him a favor. Don't even **think** about hinting that you will ever do him a favor. After all, who can tell what he's truly up to?

Really.

The wing spiker just wished he could take back what he had said when he was reconciling with Trashykawa. It was not as if he could not do what was asked of him; if anything, the task was just a piece of cake. Even a five-year-old kid can do it.

But Iwaizumi would rather play volleyball without his clothes on in front of an all girls' school than do Oikawa's bidding.

"Damnit!" Iwaizumi just had to blurt all his emotions out, in order to keep his sanity intact. What Oikawa was asking him was pretty easy, but it was his pride that was at risk. "Irrrrrrk! Just what am I supposed to do?!"

Then an idea hit him like a volleyball spike on the head.

"Right!" Iwaizumi smiled optimistically. "I'll talk to him!"

He walked home with a hopeful look on his face.

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"At an island?"

The announcement was made by Coach Ukai the next day after practice. Every member of the team, even Takeda-sensei and the female managers, had gathered in the gym to have a meeting.

"Where exactly are we going, Coach?" Sawamura asked out of curiosity.

"The details are still vague, but from what I've heard, it's a small island in the South Pacific," said Ukai. "A friend of Coach Nekomata has offered to lend his vacation houseâ€|"

"Eh?" Hinata's eyes twinkled in delight. "Vacation house?"

"Oh, like a resort!" Nishinoya blurted out excitedly. "Cool!"

"We're going on a training camp, Nishinoyaâ€|" Asahi said with a smile.

Everyone began to chatter and make some noise about what the vacation house seem like, and how they would spend their time in the island. The coach quickly silenced them with a loud cough.

"Listen up," Ukai said, frowning. "We have a problem."

The team turned to look at him. They were all tense, hoping that what

the coach was about to say was nothing but some minor trouble.

"Sure, the vacation house was for free," Ukai told them. "But the travel costâ€¦"

"I see," Takeda-sensei sensibly saw through things right away and spoke thoughtfully. "We need money to pay for the bus, since we cannot get the one the school has because the basketball team will use itâ€¦"

"Do we have enough funds to go there?" Sugawara wondered.

"In any case, we need to do something to raise money," Sawamura suggested.

"How can we do that while preparing for the Spring High?" Asahi asked worryingly.

"Not to mention, the seniors have to prepare for graduation as wellâ€¦" Ennoshita added, out of pure concern. "I guess we should ask people to become our sponsorsâ€¦"

The gymnasium was filled with silence. Most of the boys already had their heads hung low in disappointment. The anticipation for a fun training camp was drowned in by many problems for the crows.

They were not the kind of players who give up, however.

"Surely we can think of something," Hinata suddenly spoke. "Right?"

Despite the many issues she has, our dear little ginger remained bright as the shining sun for everyone to look upon.

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"Sugawara-san." Kageyama approached the silver-haired setter after the meeting. "Can I talk to you for a second?"

Sugawara stopped at the doorway and stared at his kouhai, perplexed. "What is it?"

"Uhâ€¦" Kageyama saw Hinata walk towards them, and he scowled. "Let's talk somewhere private."

"Kageyama!" Hinata shouted to the raven-haired setter. "Aren't you going home yet?"

"Go on ahead!" Kageyama replied. The gingerhead arched her eyebrows in puzzlement, but she left the gym afterwards.

Sugawara eyed Hinata's back as she went, before turning to Kageyama. "What are we going to talk about? Does this have something to do with Hinata?"

Kageyama tightened his lips. He looked hesitant, that he thought for a moment before saying anything.

"We went to Aoba Josai last time," Kageyama began. "We went there to see a fortune teller, because Nishinoya-san suggested it. Wellâ€|only I got to see the fortune teller, and she told me this weird message about Hinata."

Sugawara cocked his head to one side, waiting for the younger boy to continue his story.

"She said that Hinata's condition is just a matter of who wants to return, and who wants to remain." Kageyama finished talking. He eyed his senpai for an opinion on the matter.

"A fortune teller?" Sugawara had no idea what to say. "Uhâ€|what she said was kinda vague, don't you think?"

Kageyama, thinking the same way, nodded in agreement.

"But," Sugawara added. "If you ask me what I think her message meant, I think somebody had wished that Hinata would turn into a girl, and that it was up to that person if Hinata will become a boy again or not."

"That's what I've been thinking, too!" Kageyama answered. "But I'm not sure â€" I mean â€" who in his right mind would even ****wish**** for Hinata to become a girl?"

Sugawara looked at him in the eye seriously. "It's either somebody who hates Hinata too much, or the other way around."

Kageyama gave his senpai a baffled look. "H-huh?"

"It's not impossible, is it?" Sugawara said. "What if a guy likes Hinata so much, that he wished it? What if somebody wanted Hinata to be a girl so that he can love him and have kids with him?"

"EH?" Kageyama could not believe the theory the other guy was suggesting. "What â€" Sugawara-san â€" really?" he blushed at the idea of Hinata having kids, though he could not understand why.

Sugawara only chuckled upon seeing the ravenhead's reaction. "Oh, well, that was just a theory. No need to take it so seriously, Kageyama." He patted his kouhai's shoulder. "It was only a message from a fortune teller. I think we should look to other and more reliable sources of information."

Kageyama looked doubtful, but he nodded at him in reply.

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By the time the two setters were done talking, the other crows had left the school and had already parted ways.

"I wonder what we can do to raise money," Hinata muttered thoughtfully. She was on her way home, walking together with Nishinoya. The Guardian Deity found out that the gingerhead was going home all alone and he had decided to accompany her, downright ignoring Hinata's protests that she would be fine on her own.

"Maybe we should sell stuff?" Nishinoya suggested unhelpfully. "Or get a part-time job?"

Hinata glanced at him. "Maybe we should work at the Foothill Store?"

"That won't make sense, since Coach Ukai is the one who'll give you your salary," Tsukishima butted in as he walked past them together with a sniggering Yamaguchi. Both Hinata and Nishinoya glared at the duo in annoyance.

"He's right." Hinata sighed in defeat. "Working at the Foothill Store won't make any sense."

"That doesn't mean you should give up, though." Nishinoya told her cheerfully.

Hinata could not help but feel encouraged by her senpai's words. She thought Nishinoya naturally had that effect on people. No matter how many problems occur ahead of them, they would always make it all because they have the confidence brought by the idea that Noya always had their backs.

With the moral support coming from the Guardian Deity, hopes of overcoming trouble are high.

She glanced at him and nodded.

"Osu!" she said happily.

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"What the heck is she thinking?" Tsukishima looked over his shoulders and glared at the elfin gingerhead walking a few meters behind him. Yamaguchi followed his gaze, before eyeing him in wonder.

"She?" Yamaguchi asked. "Don't you always call Hinata a guy?"

And then a milestone has occurred in the most unexpected way for Yamaguchi. It was the first time he saw the flustered look in the face of his tall blond friend, who had always been so naturally oh-so-cool.

"Of course, I do. Hinata's a guy, after all." Tsukishima spoke, somehow sounding defensive. He then narrowed his eyes at him suspiciously. "What are you trying to say, Yamaguchi?"

"N-nothing!" Yamaguchi waved his hands in denial. "Sorry, Tsukki!"

Really, now. If Yamaguchi hadn't known Tsukishima for a long time, he would have laughed at his face already.

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Kageyama, on the other hand, should have known that something was going on the moment he stepped into his house. He should have sensed it already when he saw his mother at the entrance, contrary to the fact that she was always cooking dinner at the kitchen when he arrives.

"Welcome back, Tobio-kun," his mother, ever the loving woman, greeted him with a smile. "You have a visitor."

Kageyama gave her a puzzled look. He was obviously not expecting any visitors, especially not at this time of the evening. "Who is it?"

"He said he used to be one of your seniors in middle school," his mother answered. "Quite a charming young manâ€|"

Kageyama swallowed hard. He was really hoping that it was not Oikawa.

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"â€|A fund raiser?" Kenma asked in his naturally impassive voice.

Hinata rubbed her eyes and fought the urge to fall asleep. She hugged the cat plush toy the boys of Nekoma had given her â€" Junior-kun*, Kuroo had named him during one of their phone chats â€" and leant against the wall. "That's right."

"Can't you just get the bus your school owns?"

"Nope. The basketball team has gotten it before us. They were off to a training camp as wellâ€|"

"I see." Kenma replied. "So you need money to pay for the bus rental. Come to think of it, a lot of private bus companies offer expensive services..."

"I really don't mind even if we go to that island riding an old slammer without air conditioning," said Hinata. "I just wanna play volleyball. And maybe play on the beach. Or both, playing volleyball on the beachâ€|"

Kenma gave a soft chuckle, much to Hinata's surprise. The adorable gingerhead could only think of volleyball and nothing else. "As expected from you, Shoyo."

"What does that suppose to mean?" Hinata pouted.

"Nothing. By the way, has Kuroo been bugging you again?"

"Kuroo?" Hinata arched her eyebrows. "Not really."

Kenma heaved a sigh of relief. "Goodâ€¦"

Hinata still could not understand why Kenma wouldn't allow Captain Bedhead to talk to her, but she let it slide.

"If he ever calls, just put the phone down."

"Do I have to be that rude?"

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Iwaizumi sat on the couch, shuffling uncomfortably. His heart was beating fast, and beads of sweat began to form on his forehead despite the coolness of the room.

Kageyama stepped into the living room, and stopped dead in his tracks upon seeing him.

"Iwaizumi-san?" Kageyama had a look of surprise in his face. He sounded relieved, however.

"Kageyama!" Iwaizumi stood up.

"What are you doing here, Iwaizumi-san?" Kageyama cocked his head to one side in wonder.

Iwaizumi averted his gaze, finding it hard to say his reason for visiting the raven-haired setter. "Iâ€¦"

Damn it, how am I supposed to tell him? Iwaizumi thought. A look of frustration crept into his face, and Kageyama could see it clearly.

"Kageyamaâ€¦" Iwaizumi opened his mouth to speak, directly saying what he wanted to say. He told Kageyama about Oikawa's current disposition, his sudden sulky mood, and the favor he has asked of him. Iwaizumi said it all in the most detailed way he could manage, not bothering to hide anything from his former kouhai.

By the time he was done talking, Kageyama was already wishing that he did not ask him to talk.

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Our beloved gingerhead was in a thoughtful mood the next day. Hinata

kept on pondering about how to help the team raise some money to be able to join the second training camp with the City Boy Alliance. She had listed a few ideas last night, and she plans to tell them to Sugawara or Sawamura as suggestions. Hinata prioritized the team's welfare over her own problems (like how will she be able to participate in Spring High in her current gender) because her teammates were the ones who lifted her spirit up when she herself was in trouble.

"Don't overthink about it too much," Kageyama told her while they were on the way to the sports hall for practice. "I'm sure Sawamura-san and the other seniors are already thinking of a plan."

"I know that," Hinata replied. "I just want to help them."

"If you really want to help, you should be doing something about your mysterious gender switch."

"I **am** doing something about it. Why do you think did I agree to go to Seijoh with you?" Hinata recalled the day they went with Nishinoya to Aoba Josai to consult a famous fortune teller. Kageyama, remembering the weirdness he'd been through, winced. "And you really just have to force us to go home!"

"Oh, shut it. It's not like fortune tellers tell the truth!" Kageyama averted his gaze from her. He still hadn't told Hinata about the mysterious woman at the festival.

Hinata narrowed her eyes at him, sensing something suspicious. "You're not telling me something, are you?"

Kageyama felt nervous, but he stood his ground and pretended that he was unfazed by her prying eyes and cuteness. "So what if I am?" he said. "It's none of your business."

Hinata, not exactly the pushy kind of person, simply shrugged. "Oh well!"

Then again, curiosity gets the better of the gingerhead every now and then.

"Were you scared to see The Great King, Kageyama-kun?"

"I already said it's none of your business!"

The freak duo could have ended up endlessly bickering had they not encountered Yachi at the hallway. In her hand was a colorful flyer, with an image of a girl dressed as a maid with cat ears.

"Yachi-san?" Hinata eyed the flyer curiously.

"I've got some good news," Yachi spoke excitedly. "We have a chance to raise enough money to join the training camp!"

"Eh?" Hinata naturally exploded with joy; Kageyama, on the other hand, looked suspicious.

"How?" the raven-haired setter asked, doubtful.

"Ahâ€|well," Yachi showed the freak duo the flyer.

"Group cosplay?!" Kageyama blurted out, aghast.

Hinata furrowed her eyebrows. "What's a group cosplay?"

"A group cosplay is when a team will put on costumes based on a certain theme. Like a group of characters from one anime series."

"Oh! Like when we all wear Karasuno's uniform?"

"You don't understand it at allâ€|" Kageyama had to face palm himself.

"Something like thatâ€|" Yachi shrugged and smiled awkwardly at Hinata. "Anyway, the first prize is really big, so I really want to suggest this."

"What?" Kageyama frowned. "There's no way we'll â€" "

"It's a GREAT IDEA!" Hinata shouted. "Let's go tell everyone!"

"H-hold on," Kageyama told the gingerhead. "We can hardly afford to make costumesâ€|"

But Hinata and Yachi were already on their way to the gymnasium, excited to tell the news.

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When the freak duo along with Yachi arrived at the gymnasium it was surprisingly jam-packed with so many people, particularly girls. Hinata had to squeeze her way into the crowd blocking the door, and the raven-haired setter and the blonde manager followed suit.

"Why are there so many people in here?" Hinata asked â€" shouted, rather, for she could barely hear her own voice in the midst of the screaming ladies around her.

"Like hell I know why," Kageyama shouted back.

"It seems like some kind of superstar came to our gym," Yachi said.

Hearing the blonde's words, Kageyama remembered last night's conversation with Iwaizumi. He felt a shiver run down his spine. He began to have a bad feeling who was that "superstar".

Hinata giggled as she shove the remaining girls aside. "It's not like a popular volleyball player is coming today â€" " she turned around and froze. "Holy â€" "

**Holy shit,** Kageyama thought in horror.

Standing in the middle of the court, facing Sawamura, Sugawara and the rest of the crows, was Oikawa Tooru.

"What is the Great King doing here?!" Hinata blurted out.

Oikawa surprisingly heard her voice despite the crowd of girls screaming out his name. He glanced around in search of Hinata's voice, and no sooner than that did he set his eyes on her.

"Youâ€¦" there was delight in his voice, as if he has been waiting for this to happen. As if he's been longing to see the elfin gingerhead. He then stared at his former underclassman, Kageyama. "Long time no see, Tobio-chan."

Kageyama swallowed hard. He knew this was about to happen. Iwaizumi-san told him so.

"Eeh?" Hinata could not believe what she was seeing. "Seriously! What's going on in here?!"

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**Nee, have you seen that asterisk? It must mean somethingâ€¦ :3
Lunary, that asterisk was for youâ€¦**

BTW I've decided to delete my first KnB x HQ! cross-over for some reconstruction process. Don't worry, I'm just trying to lift myself up after a stressful work during internship. I realized that I hadn't exerted my best effort in writing Magnet, hence I have to start it all over again. I am very sorry for the inconvenience.

Anyway, I've decided that I try to set up some crack ships on my own and put them together into a single plot. I'm thinking between "Teenagers" and "Radioactive" as titles (yeah, apparently I've been listening to too many bands).

Heheh.

21. Chapter 21

aya-.-desu: Islandsâ€¦XDD

**ssspooky: Well, I can't do anything about it if you're starting to find Hinata's lack of response boring. You see, I believe that love doesn't happen at first sight and, wellâ€¦it's truly a long-term process, isn't it? But that's just my opinion, and I respect your opinion as well. I hope you will still keep on reading my fic even if I don't meet your standards. **

**hinatasexual: Gomen for the short chappie.
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silverlonewolfstar: hmmâ€¦your name's familiarâ€¦I'm glad you like Abracadabra, by the way.

****Everyone else (Lunary, to be more specific): Okay, I might as well say something about that asterisk. I'm currently writing a chapter 21.5 (like those OVA episodes) which involves the stuff toy the Nekoma boys had given to Hinata while she was in Tokyo. Apparently something's wrong with that thingâ€¦****

****BTW anyone of you who has read the Bane Chronicles? Or The Mortal Instruments series? (Seriously, please leave a review if you have read them, because I am in need of expert advice and knowledge. I'm writing a fic about Magnus Bane and Alec Lightwood, and by the Angel, I don't want to fail Malec shippers). And who has played The Secret World? I really, really wanna know what's up with that game. It's not available in Asia, unfortunately, and the game's story and environment was so interesting I just wanna write about it. Like, maybe a love story between a Templar hottie and a guy from Illuminati who always got into his nerves, perhaps? Yep, I'm talking about writing a yaoi fanfic.****

****Wellâ€¦****

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 21: Chances areâ€¦****

Tsukishima disapprovingly folded his arms across his chest as he watched The Great King Oikawa Tooru from the bench line. He disliked the way Seijoh's setter barged into Karasuno's gym without prior notice. The guy seemed to act superior with his victory against the crows during Inter-High, or so Tsukishima thought. It wasn't as if he cared about losing. But what Oikawa was doing was annoying, really, and Tsukishima rarely gets annoyed. He was much used to being the one doing the irritating stuff to others.

"Where's Junior-kun*?" Tsukishima asked Yamaguchi. "Hopefully Hinata brought him today."

Yamaguchi glanced at him and gave a worried smile. "Eh? I thought you hated that stuffed toy. Didn't you say that Junior-kun tried to kill you before?"

Tsukishima scowled. He clearly was not fond of remembering the events a few days after the team came home from Tokyo. Some things are just better forgotten. "Surely that demonic plush toy will annihilate Oikawa before me," he murmured, although he was uncertain about it.

"Wellâ€¦we can't be too sure about that." Yamaguchi could not believe that the tall blonde would consider the idea of summoning an evil creature just to get rid of Oikawa.

Really, they shouldn't. Junior-kun almost threw Tsukishima into the path of an oncoming truck, after all.

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"What are you doing here, Oikawa-san?" Kageyama did not bother beating around the bush when he spoke to Oikawa. He was obviously annoyed at the mere presence of the Great King, who hardly has a reason to visit Karasuno in the first place.

Aoba Josai's top setter feigned a sweet smile. "I'm disappointed that you're talking to me this way, Tobio-chan. Not that I'd expected a better behaviorâ€|"

**Says the guy who barges into our gym without any notice**, Kageyama thought.

"Anyway," Oikawa did not bother to wait for a response from his former underclassman. "I'm here for a good reason." He then turned to face Sawamura. "I would like to ask you guys a favor, Captain. Would you mind if we have a little chit-chat with your coach?"

Sawamura gave Oikawa an appraising look. Karasuno's captain was getting suspicious of him as well. "All right," he hesitantly told him in the end. "Coach Ukai will be here any minuteâ€|"

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The screaming fangirls were already gone by the time the coach has arrived, but the tension was still in the air even as the first and second year members were doing warm ups.

"I wonder what they are talking aboutâ€|" Hinata watched Oikawa along with Sawamura, Coach Ukai and Takeda-sensei talk in the corner of the gym. She glanced at Kageyama, who was sitting on the floor stretching his arms and legs. "Hey, what do you think are they talking about, Kageyama?"

"I have no idea," Kageyama answered without looking at her, busy as he was with the warm ups. "And I don't really care."

Hinata pursed her lips at him, annoyed. "What a snob."

"Huh?" veins popped on the forehead of the raven-haired setter.

Hinata averted her gaze from him. "Nothing," She muttered childishly. She really dislikes it when Kageyama acts superior and cocky, but that's just the way he was.

**There's no use forcing him to be nice,** Hinata thought sullenly.

It did not take long before Oikawa was done talking to the coach and the seniors. By the time they returned to the court Sawamura had an

unreadable expression on his face, which made the juniors all the nervous.

"We'll have a meeting later," Sawamura told everyone. "Let's get back to practice."

"Well then," Oikawa said. "I don't want to disturb you, so I better get going."

**You really should get going,** Kageyama thought with a frown.

"Now, now, Tobio-chan," Oikawa wagged a finger at him. "I know you already miss me, but we both know very well that we will meet again soon."

Kageyama knew exactly what his ex-senpai meant when he said those words. He will meet Oikawa again, very soon._** At Spring High.**_

"As for you," Oikawa casually walked towards Hinata, who froze in horror. Even in a girl's body the gingerhead was still intimidated by the presence of strong opponents. "You're chibi-chan's cousin, am I right?"

Hinata glanced left and right, in search of a taller teammate whom she could hide herself behind. The closest one was obviously Kageyama, and quickly she clung at his back like a barnacle. Kageyama stiffened when he felt the little ginger clutch the hem of his shirt as she peered at the Great King. Oikawa noticed the cheeks of his former kouhai turn bright red.

"Y-yeah," Hinata said, her voice shaking. "What? Do you wanna fight?"

The girl's shyness made Oikawa's heart flutter, although he disliked the way Hinata hid behind Kageyama. But he still believed in himself as the better ladies' man. He knew he was at a disadvantage, especially after the events during the school festival, but he remained unfazed. "Of course not. I'm just afraid we haven't formally met." He held out a hand. "My name's Oikawa Tooru."

Hinata reluctantly held Oikawa's hand, in a very brief handshake. What happened next was really unexpected, though.

Oikawa kissed the back of her hand instead.

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If anyone touches the adorable baby ginger-haired crow of Karasuno High, chances are you're about to die.

But Oikawa Tooru managed to get out of the gymnasium alive, simply because it is illegal to kill people. Nonetheless he was very certain that everyone in the team has developed a grudge against him, especially Kageyama.

**It doesn't matter,** Oikawa thought.

He smiled, satisfied, as he walked out of the gymnasium and left the school.

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It took everyone a while to recover from the shocking and undeniably bold gesture of Oikawa. And when they all did, the boys began to panic, as if Hinata's hand getting kissed was a crime greater than murder. Even the seniors themselves were on the verge of exploding into anger.

"GYAAAAAAAAA! HINATAAAA!"

"Quick," Nishinoya said, totally alarmed. "Somebody wash Hinata's hand!"

"Use alcohol!" Tanaka added, freaking out as well.
"Alcohol!"

Tsukishima folded his arms across his chest. "I think holy water works better," he suggested unhelpfully.

"Stop joking around!" Sugawara yelled at the boys, before looking at Hinata worriedly. The gingerhead was speechless, frozen, with a facial expression that he has never seen before. "Hinata? Are you okay?"

Hinata glanced at him, looking totally absent-minded. "Yeah. I'm fine."

The blank expression in her face told everyone otherwise.

"Don't tell me," Kageyama said, one eyebrow raised at Hinata. "That you were surprised by that gesture. Oikawa-san is popular among ladies, and he knows it. It was very obvious of him to hit on you."

The mere thought of the Great King hitting on her sent Hinata over the edge. "Eh?" she could not believe what she was hearing from the raven-haired setter. Her eyes went wide with disbelief.
"EH?!"

"Wow." Tsukishima was sincerely amazed by her naiveté. "You haven't realized it yet? You really are stupid."

"Shut up!" Hinata glared at the blonde in annoyance. Just because she was innocent when it comes to how boys show affection towards girls doesn't mean she was stupid. "I-I know Oikawa-san is popular among girls! It's just that—" she looked slightly confused. "Why would he notice someone like me?"

Silence fell upon the crows. A surprised look was evident among the boys, especially among Kageyama, Tsukishima and Nishinoya.

**Hinata you idiot,** Kageyama frowned. _**Why wouldn't he notice you?**_

**She never noticed Kuroo's obvious ways of courting her, and she barely realized that Oikawa has a crush on her. Just how dense is she?** Tsukishima could not help but wonder. If there could be anyone who gets amazed at a person's idiocy, it would be him.

**You're so adorable, I don't see why anyone wouldn't notice youâ€¦|** Nishinoya wanted to say to her, but he found himself unable to speak at that moment.

"Oi. Now is not the time to razz each other," Sawamura said sternly, breaking the silence. "Let's get back to practice. We'll have a meeting afterwards."

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A meeting was held right after a long and tiring volleyball practice. Karasuno team sat on the floor and gathered around Coach Ukai and Takeda-sensei as the two adults stood side by side in front of the white board.

"The reason Oikawa came hereâ€¦|" Ukai the Younger was the first to speak. "is because he needs our help."

A couple of eyebrows rose inevitably because of that statement.

"Uhâ€¦|" Nishinoya spoke for all the first and second years. "Why would he need _**our**_ help?"

"Wellâ€¦|" Takeda-sensei spoke. He sounded a bit uncertain. "Oikawa wants our participation in some sort of charity activity. Every now and then Oikawa teaches volleyball at his nephew's school."

Kageyama furrowed his eyebrows in apprehension. "Don't tell me."

"Oikawa is looking for young volleyball players to help him teach the kids."

"Oh?" Hinata was interested. "Sounds fun."

Kageyama glared at her. "You can't be serious," he said in disbelief. "He just made a pass on you a while ago."

"That doesn't have anything to do with this," Hinata replied, annoyed that the events that took place a few hours ago has been brought up. "It's volleyball and children."

"Hinata's right," Sawamura agreed. "It's all about teaching children volleyball."

"I don't get it," said Tsukishima. "Oikawa has his own team. Why doesn't he ask for their help instead?"

"He's right!" Tanaka yelled in agreement. "He shouldn't be bothering us here!"

"Well, his teammates are going to help with the charity as well," said the coach. "It'll be a team effort between us and Seijoh."

"I guess we need to come up with a decision," said Takeda-sensei. "Shall we help teach children how to play volleyball?"

Silence befell the gymnasium as the team thought about it carefully. There was only one person who came up with a decision right away.

"If it's for the benefit of the kids," said Hinata, "why not?"

Everyone else agreed afterward.

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"Captain," Hinata spoke to Sawamura in the club room after the meeting. "Can I have a word with you?"

"What?" Sawamura said. "Sure. What is it?"

"About the fund for the next training camp—I have a suggestion. Well," Hinata scratched the back of her head sheepishly. "It was actually Yachi-san's suggestion."

Sawamura smiled at her kindly. "I would like to hear your suggestion. What is it?"

"Um—Yachi-san saw an ad for a group cosplay contest and I was wondering if maybe we could join? The prize money's enough to fund our trip."

Sawamura smiled at her kindly, although he spoke in a hesitant voice. "That's a good idea, Hinata, but—don't you think it's a bit risky? We need to have great costumes in order to win that contest. I don't think we can afford those."

Hinata looked crestfallen. "Right—" she said.

Sawamura patted her head. "Now, don't look so sad. I'm sure we'll come up with something," he assured her.

Hinata quickly brightened up. "Osu!"

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"Group cosplay?" Kenma asked.

"Yeah," Hinata answered. "Sawamura-san turned it down, though. He said we might not be able to afford the costumesâ€¦"

It was starting to become a habit, Kenma calling Hinata at night. They would talk about the things they've done for the day, from school activities to volleyball practice. Hinata was happy of the company provided by Nekoma's setter, but part of her believes that Kenma was doing this because he wanted to keep Kuroo in check. Kenma keeping Kuroo in check meant that Kuroo wouldn't be able to contact Hinata without Kenma knowing.

"I have some friends who can provide you guys with second-hand costumes," Kenma suggested. "They're of a good quality and can be bought at an affordable price. And I think Kuroo can do something to get you a discount."

Hinata bit her lip. It was a charming offer, yetâ€¦

"What if we don't win?" she muttered. Hesitation was evident in her soft voice.

"You?" Kenma sounded surprised. "This must be the first time I heard you doubt yourself, let alone your teammates."

This statement hit Hinata hard. "You're right," she said. "What should I worry about? Karasuno can win a cosplay contest!"

"That's the spirit," Kenma cheered, though his tone lacked energy.

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"Kenma said that he can help us with the costumes if we join the group cosplay," Hinata told Kageyama the next day.

"You're still insisting that idea?" Kageyama scowled. He never liked the idea of putting on a costume; he found it silly.

"I don't see anything wrong about it," said Hinata. "I mean, it's just a group cosplay. What could go wrong?"

"What could go wrong? We'd look like idiots in weird clothes, for one."

Hinata pursed her lips stubbornly. "Do you even wanna go to the training camp?"

"Of course I do, dumbass! Where'd that come from?"

The freak duo began to bicker childishly as they walked down the hallway. Well, it was natural for the two of them, but for most of the students in the corridor, they look like an adorable young couple giving some tough love to each other.

They suddenly came into a halt upon seeing Tsukishima, who was walking together with Yamaguchi.

Yamaguchi was holding a paperback copy of a book, and he was showing Tsukishima something along its pages.

"Look, Tsukki. The white rabbit looks like you!" said Yamaguchi.

"No," Tsukishima replied, sulky as always. "We don't look alike."

"Oi!" Hinata shouted. "Yamaguchi! Tsukki!"

Yamaguchi turned around and waved a hand at Hinata and Kageyama. Tsukishima, on the other hand, seemed to cringe upon hearing his nickname being shouted down the corridor, for the entire student population of Karasuno High to hear.

Hinata quickly walked over to them. "What's that?" she pointed at the book.

"Alice in Wonderland," Yamaguchi answered, showing the book to Hinata. "An illustrated copy I found at home while I was cleaning up my room. Hereâ€¦" he showed one of the illustrations in the book, and pointed at the image of a tall young man with white bunny ears and was wearing a black suit. "This is the White Rabbit. He looks like Tsukki, right?"

"Eeeh?" Hinata gushed, delighted. "You're right!" she looked upon Tsukishima's face. "Maybe you should cosplay as the Rabbit, Tsukki!"

Tsukishima glared at her. "Like I would do thatâ€¦" he grumbled.

"Why not? It'll be cute!"

"You have an absurd idea of what is 'cute', you know that?"

Hinata glanced at Kageyama for help. "Hey, what do you think? Maybe we should go for an Alice in Wonderland theme?"

Kageyama looked at the gingerhead in disbelief. Hinata just couldn't let go of the idea. Then again, none of the other team members had come up with a better idea for a fund raiser.

**Maybe we should take a risk and join the contest? But what ifâ€¦** Kageyama thought deeply. Joining the cosplay contest would be a huge risk, but if Karasuno wins it'll be totally worth it.

"Oi, Kageyama." Hinata stared at the raven-haired setter. "You okay?"

Kageyama looked into her chocolate brown eyes, a bit hesitantly. The chances of winning are small for Karasuno, and yetâ€¦

"Hinata," he said. "How much is the first prize for the best group cosplay?"

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I'm really sorry for the late update. I was finishing my requirements for graduation (and battling my right to become an honor student " I believe I am to become a cum laude, at least"keep all your joints crossed!) and I got sick recently (blood infection again). But here it is!

Btw I think you can see what I'm planning to do here: Hinata as Alice, Tsukki as the White Rabbit, and then the King of Hearts"ah, that's the problem.

And who should be Cheshire Cat? And the Mad Hatter? And do please tell me the other important characters of Alice in Wonderland that I've forgotten. It's been a while since I last read Lewis Carroll"

BTW have you read the recent chapters of Haikyuu manga? Do you guys feel the feels that I feel? (T^T) Karasuno's match against Aoba Josai"

22. Chapter 22

Lunary: Yeah, I like the idea of putting the other guys in the cosplay"

**Tamina: yay, a new reviewer! **

Guests: Thank you soooo much for the love!

Everyone else: Thank you very much for all the suggestions. I love how you guys are so into this cosplay thing for our dearest crows.

**SO. I've been having a tough time writing my Alice in Wonderland cosplay"I mean, trying to match the characters' personalities were a bad idea in the first place, since all of the characters in Alice in Wonderland are MAD (Cheshire Cat: We're all mad here!). Thus I basically followed my instinct and had come up with something"but for the meantime - **

**Hah! Every anime deserves a .5 episode, right? Even fanfics should have them! **

Ta-daaaah! Abracadabra's first SPECIAL CHAPTER! This story happened sometime between after the crows came home from Tokyo and when Hinata as a girl first encountered Oikawa.

THIS IS LIKE, AN OVA CHAPTER. LOL

DOUZO!

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****Chapter 21.5: Bionic Kitten****

"Oh, Hinata. There's a red stain on your shorts."

Hinata's immediate reflex was to blush in embarrassment, double back, look over the back of her shorts, and check for the nonexistent bloodstain. Tsukishima simply laughed at her in reply, and Yamaguchi, despite pitying his short teammate, could not help but snigger as well.

Hinata frowned, realizing that she had been duped again. "Tsukishima you lanky jerk!" she glared at the blonde, who was grinning from ear to ear in satisfaction.

"Oh, jeez, that's the fourth time you actually checked," Tsukishima said while smirking triumphantly at her. "Just how gullible are you?"

"It's not funny!" Hinata yelled, annoyed. She stomped towards the tall boy, hoping that she could retaliate, but then she suddenly came into a halt. She bit her lip as if to keep herself from whining in pain while she was holding her belly in agony. "Damn this stomachache!"

"That's dysmenorrhea, Hinata!" Sugawara said in a sympathetic tone.

"Dysme?" what? the look on the gingerhead's face was an obvious sign that she had no idea what her senpai was talking about.

"It's the medical term for menstrual cramps," Tsukishima said smugly. "Not that you understand what that means."

"I-I understand what it means!" Hinata yelled in denial. She obviously didn't understand what dysmenorrhea is. All she knew was that she promptly freaked the hell out when she found her bed a bloody mess one morning.

This has been the crows' situation in the past week, after they return from their Tokyo excursion. Since Hinata's mysterious gender switch, everyone should have expected the monthly period to happen. Then again, not everyone has a teammate who magically switched genders. Never in their entire lives did the boys of Karasuno volleyball team encounter a situation where one of their own teammates shall be the one to experience the monthly shedding of excess blood from the uterus and out of the body well, everyone knows where all those blood go.

"Oi!" Nishinoya shouted at Tsukishima and Yamaguchi from the other side of the court. "Stop bullying Hinata!"

Tsukishima thought about dealing more damage, thought better of it, and went on his way. Hinata remained in her place, still annoyed and in pain.

"Why don't you take the rest of the afternoon off?" Sugawara

approached her and told her kindly.

Hinata frowned, disliking the idea of not practicing volleyball.
"Butâ€¦"

"Don't be so stupid," Kageyama shouted from the other side of the court. "You must not play volleyball if you're not feeling well."

"But I'm fine!" Hinata yelled insistently.

"You're obviously not fine!" Kageyama blurted out in return.

"Stop bickering!" Sawamura said sternly. "Hinata, you can go home now. Take a break."

"But â€" " Hinata was on the brink of crying.

"Hinata." Sawamura lowered his voice and gave her a kind smile. "Do as I say."

There was just no way Hinata would ever argue with the captain, so she reluctantly (and kinda tearfully) went home.

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"Will she be all right?" asked Nishinoya. "Shouyou?"

"Of course she will be all right," Sugawara answered.

The Guardian Deity looked outside the gymnasium absentmindedly. He was obviously not reassured.

"But Shouyou's dealing with a **real** girl problem," Nishinoya murmured. He was getting worried about Hinata having to do things that girls usually do. It was one thing to put on a skirt; having a period is an entirely different matter. The libero was afraid that the gingerhead won't be able to take it.

He felt a firm hand on his shoulder, and glanced to see Sawamura smiling at him.

"Hinata will be fine," the captain told Nishinoya reassuringly.

Of course, Nishinoya thought with relief. **Shouyou's a strong person, after all.**

He knew things are going to be all right. Or so he (and everyone else) thought.

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That evening, Hinata was restless. She didn't get to work hard in volleyball practice. Hence she had a lot of energy to spare. Stuck in her bedroom resting in a fetal position on the cot to tend her aching womb, she could not think of anything else to do. In the end she reached for her mobile phone, and dialed the number of her (sort of) phone pal, Nekoma's setter Kenma Kozume.

"Hello?"

"Kenma," Hinata smiled in relief. "How are you doing?"

Kenma paused for a few seconds before answering. "I'm fine. Why are you calling?"

"Wellâ€¦I've nothing else to do," Hinata answered, embarrassed. "I've been sent home early today."

"What? Why?" Kenma sounded concerned, much to the gingerhead's surprise. "Are you sick?"

"No, not reallyâ€¦" Hinata smiled; she was somewhat touched by the fact that her friend cared about her health.

"What happened? Have you been injured during practice?"

"I'm fine, Kenma," Hinata said. "I'm not sick, I'm justâ€¦I'm in an extremely feminine situation right now."

Another long pause. Hinata felt awkward while waiting for her friend's response.

"You're having your monthly period?" For the first time in forever, Kenma truly sounded amazed.

"Yeah," Hinata winced. She didn't like bringing up the subject of monthly period. Most girls don't.

"I don't get it, Shouyou. A lot of female athletes even compete in the Olympics despite having their period. Why were you sent home?"

"It's the dysme â€" " Hinata frowned, still unable to say the word properly. "The menstrual cramp thing."

"Oh." Kenma seemed to understand what was happening. "Was it so painful?"

"Yes, but I guess it's only because I wasn't used to it. I mean, my mother has been suffering menstrual period since god-knows-when and she seems to be all right, while Iâ€¦" Hinata pursed her lips. "Well, I'm biologically supposed to be a guy."

"Right." Kenma sounded grim. "You do understand what this means, right?"

"Uhâ€¦" Hinata arched her eyebrows in wonder. "What do you mean?"

"What having a period means to a woman," Kenma told her. "Do you know

what that means?"

"It's a sign that they're authentic girls?" Hinata guessed blindly.

"Not exactly," said Kenma. "Having a period is a sign that you're a fertile woman, Shouyou. If you understand what I mean."

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"What does it mean when somebody says I'm fertile?" Hinata asked the seniors the other day.

Sawamura promptly spewed water out of his mouth while drinking from a tumbler; Asahi slipped and fell on his butt (and he was **just** standing and doing nothing else at the bench area when it happened), while Sugawara was to the point of bursting the volleyball he was carrying. The gingerhead's question really caught them off guard.

"Where did that question come from?" Sawamura asked, with a smile that was in between kind and downright scary.

"I spoke to Kenma yesterday," Hinata, who did not seem to notice the expression of her seniors, answered. "He said that having a period is a sign that I'm fertile."

"Didn't expect that perversely scientific remark to come from that kid," Sawamura murmured in a deadly angry tone. "What else did he say to you?"

Hinata thought for a moment. She then looked at the seniors and shrugged. "Nothing. He just hung up."

"How rude!" Asahi smiled awkwardly; yet he somehow understood why Kenma simply ended the call "Hinata must have barraging him with questions about fertility."

"Hinata," Sugawara said. "To be fertile means you are capable of conceiving a child."

"Capable of " oh." Hinata was enlightened by the explanation. "So I can get pregnant?"

She asked the question in such a straightforward manner that it took Sawamura, Sugawara and Asahi a long while to give an answer.

"Uh!" Asahi glanced away, unable to give a response.

"In a way, yes!" Sugawara spoke, looking embarrassed.

"Why don't you go get the volleyballs in the equipment room first, Hinata?" Sawamura was quick to change the topic. Hinata did not seem to mind, however, and headed for the equipment room to get the stuff.

Asahi heaved a sigh of relief. "That almost gave me a heart attack."

"You almost get a heart attack every time," said Sugawara.

"Now that Hinata has mentioned it," Sawamura spoke. "I think we should be keener in protecting our kouhai from all those annoying suitors. Just to make sure!"

Sugawara's eyes gleamed at the prospect of slaying anyone who dares to lay a hand on Hinata. "Yes, of course."

Suitors beware.

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"What's the matter with Sawamura-san, Sugawara-san and Asahi-san?" Kageyama observed the seniors. All of them seem to keep an eye on any guy who stays less than a hundred meters away from Hinata for more than one second.

"How should I know?" Tanaka answered. "I think they've become nuts since morning."

The three seniors were absolutely keen on watching over Hinata. Ennoshita, having no idea what was happening, tried to approach the gingerhead to help her practice receives. He ended up backing away into a corner due to a creepy looking Suga.

"Did something happen a while ago?" Kageyama wondered.

"Oi, Kageyama!" Hinata, who was barely aware of the situation, began to walk over to where the raven-haired setter was. "Let's practice together!"

"Oh, crap, Hinata's coming over!" Tanaka took a step back in fright. "Run away before the senpais set their eyes on you, Kageyama!"

"H-huh?!" Kageyama was dumbfounded.

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"You know," Hinata told Kenma. "My teammates have been acting weird today."

"How come?" Kenma asked.

"The seniors have been how should I put it unnecessarily overprotective?" Hinata rolled onto the bed, holding her mobile phone close to her ear and cuddling the cute stuffed toy she got from the

boys of Nekoma.

"What makes you think that?" Kenma had an idea why Karasuno's seniors have become overprotective, however; they must have learned about his scientific explanations on how a girl's body works.

"They kinda didn't like the idea of me capable of having a baby. I mean, like carrying a baby in my tummy." Hinata was having a hard time explaining herself. "Don't get me wrong, I'm still a virgin" "

"I get your point," Kenma began to chuckle, albeit slightly. "Shouyou, I think it's just normal for them to become overprotective. Seniors always have to take care of juniors. I guess"

"Hm" Hinata paused, thoughtfully. "Have you ever done that?"

"Done what?" Kenma felt his heart miss a beat; were they still talking about having kids?

"You know" Hinata played with the stuffed cat's furry ears. "Taking care of you kouhai? Have you ever wanted to protect someone so much before?"

The question made Kenma pause for a long moment. He did want to protect Hinata once, so badly, back when they were running away from the gangsters in Tokyo. He even surprised himself by actually fighting a guy who was probably thrice bigger than he was, just to defend the gingerhead.

It was a rare feat for Kenma, but he knew he would do it again.

"Not really," he lied.

"Oh," Hinata did not sound the least disappointed. "You know what? I'd want to protect you, Kenma. And my family, and everyone else."

He knew Hinata was talking about all of her friends. But Kenma was clearly caught off guard by that remark, and he was very happy there was no one in his room to see him blushing hard.

"Shouyou," he said. "You should bring Junior-kun around tomorrow."

"Junior-kun?" Hinata arched her eyebrows in puzzlement.

"The stuffed cat. His name's Junior-kun. That's what Kuroo told me."

"Junior-kun? That's a weird name."

"Tell me about it. Kuroo said it's a lucky charm, though."

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Hinata followed Kenma's instruction and brought the stuffed toy "Junior-kun" to Karasuno the next day. It really seemed to work as a lucky charm. The girls find it cute that some of them even wanted to borrow it. The boys, on the other hand, find the plushie an accessory fit for the cute and popular Hinata Shouko-chan.

"Eeeh? That looks cute, Hinata-chan!"

"Right! Can I cuddle that toy too?"

"Hina-chan that stuffed kitty looks good on you. Maybe you should try putting on some cat ears next time!"

"Hinata-chan wearing cat ears! That would be so cute!"

Hinata was definitely averse to wearing cat ears when going to school, but she liked how everyone reacted positively to Junior-kun. Even the teachers adored the stuffed toy, and they did not give Hinata a hard time in her studies. Everything was going well.

Then Hinata went into the volleyball team's clubroom.

"Oi, what's that?" Tanaka was the first to notice Junior-kun, whose head was poking out of Hinata's bag.

"Eh? Is that a stuffed toy?" Ennoshita asked.

"Stuffed toy? Did somebody give Hinata a gift?" Yamaguchi said.

The seniors' ears perked up when they heard the question. Did a persistent suitor managed to escape right under their noses? They quickly turned around, staring at Hinata to verify the truth.

"What?" Hinata glanced at the stuffed toy. "Oh. This is a gift from Kuro-chan and Kenma." She pulled Junior-kun out of her bag to show to her teammates. "Isn't he cute?"

"That's a guy?" Nishinoya looked baffled.

"It looks irritating!" Tsukishima muttered while glaring at the plush toy suspiciously.

"Why a stupid-looking cat, of all things?" Kageyama said.

Hinata pursed her lips in annoyance. "He doesn't look stupid, you are!" she stuck her tongue out in childish retaliation, which pissed Kageyama.

"Huh?!" Networks of veins popped all over Kageyama's face as he stared at the gingerhead vehemently.

"Stop bickering," Sawamura scolded the freak duo. He then glanced at Hinata. "You feel better now?"

Hinata smiled sweetly at the captain. "Much." Although she had felt like she was being punched in the gut a few hours ago because of her menstrual cramps.

"Good." Sawamura glanced at everyone else. "All right, let's go to the gym. Hinata, it's your turn to change."

Hinata nodded in reply. "Okay," she said, and watched everyone leave the clubroom.

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Hinata joined the volleyball practice shortly after she changed into her gym clothes. The team started with warm ups, and after that they practice receives.

"How come you still suck at this?" Kageyama was partnered with Hinata, much to the gingerhead's chagrin.

"Shut up!" Hinata shouted angrily in reply. "I've been practicing hard, you know!"

"Those two just can't stop being so noisy," Tsukishima, who partnered with Yamaguchi in receiving practice, muttered.

"Well, we should be used to it by now," Yamaguchi replied. "Nee, Tsukki?"

"Get used to them? But they're so annoying," Tsukishima grumbled. He served the volleyball to Yamaguchi, who managed to receive it but was quite out of form, sending the ball ricocheting to the wall and outside the gym.

"Sorry, Tsukki!" Yamaguchi began to walk outside. "I'll go get it!"

Luckily, the ball did not go so far. It was only a few meters from the doorway, and Yamaguchi quickly went to pick it up. However, he noticed something as he walked back inside.

"Huh?" Yamaguchi doubled back, and glanced at the rack where the shoes were placed. Hinata's cat plush toy was resting on top of it, in an awkward position as if it was on the verge of falling. Yamaguchi wondered whether Hinata had left the stuffed toy there on purpose, or if she had unknowingly placed it there. He brought Junior-kun inside the sports hall.

"Look what I've found, Tsukki!" Yamaguchi tossed the stuffed toy to Tsukishima, who caught its tail between two fingers.

"The annoying cat," Tsukishima eyed Junior-kun in disgust. "Where did you get this, Yamaguchi?"

"I found it on top of the shoe rack outside," Yamaguchi answered.

Hinata suddenly saw them holding Junior-kun and blanched. "O-oi! Why are you holding Junior-kun?"

"Junior-kun?" Tsukishima stared at the plush toy, then at Hinata. He grinned wickedly. "You call this thing Junior-kun?"

"Shut up!" Hinata stomped towards the tall blonde while biting her lower lip hard, ignoring another bout of menstrual cramp. She attempted to snatch Junior away from Tsukishima, but he raised his arms up high. Hinata jumped, but he was quick to lower his arms to keep her from getting her stuffed toy.

"Give it back!" Hinata was having a hard time saving Junior-kun.

Tsukishima looked as if he was having a great time. "Sure, short-legs. If you can grab it!"

The two of them went on bickering childishly, Hinata trying to reach the plushie while Tsukishima kept on dodging her arms.

"Oi, Tsukki! Give Junior-kun back!"

"What? Why? You're becoming a moe day by day." Tsukishima kept on swaying the stuffed toy away from her.

"Stop acting like a kid and give the ugly toy back," Kageyama yelled at the blonde.

"He's right!" Hinata agreed, until she realized Kageyama had insulted Junior-kun as well. She glared at the raven-haired setter.
"Hey!"

"What? Face it, Hinata. That toy looks annoying." Kageyama shrugged.

Tsukishima would have laughed at Kageyama's remark, but he gave a pained yelp instead, and suddenly dropped the plush toy.

"Tsukki!" Yamaguchi was quick to the rescue. "What's the matter?"

"What the hell?" Tsukishima glared at the stuffed toy, which Hinata quickly picked up from the floor.

Hinata hugged Junior-kun and stuck her tongue out at Tsukishima. Kageyama on the other hand, raised an eyebrow at the tall blonde, puzzled.

"Tsukki you jerk!" Hinata said, and ran away to take Junior-kun to a safe place.

Tsukishima watched the gingerhead leave, the plush toy in her arms. Junior-kun looked at him with a wide grin which reminded him of Kuroo, only creepier and deadlier.

"Weird!" Tsukishima frowned.

"Eh? What is?" Yamaguchi asked.

"That ugly toy!" Tsukishima furrowed his eyebrows in deep thought.
"I was pretty sure it bit me."

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He was the last person you'd think of being superstitious, or worse, irrationally insane, but if Tsukishima thought he got bitten by a stuffed kitty, he was certain it really happened. Thus he kept on watching Hinata carrying the plush toy around, and flinched every time he thought Junior-kun made some sort of move.

"Tsukki, you look so out of it," said Yamaguchi. "Are you sick or something?"

"What are you saying?" Tsukishima replied exasperatedly. "I'm fine."

"Oh. Okay." Yamaguchi slowly walked away from him.

Although he was extremely worried about his friend, Yamaguchi knew better than to stick around and bother Tsukishima. Thus he left the tall blonde alone. Tsukishima kept on glaring at the freak duo Hinata and Kageyama as they left the sports hall together.

Hinata and Kageyama walked home together that evening, without the seniors or the other members of the team with them. It felt pretty awkward, at least to Kageyama, for he never walked together with a girl, albeit that girl was Hinata. She was smiling while holding her bike when they walked together in companionable silence. For some reason Kageyama felt as if he was in a shoujo manga.

So he tried to make some noise for a change.

"Do you really have to bring that thing to school?" Kageyama asked. He glared at Junior-kun, whom Hinata placed in the front basket of her bike together with her bag. "That toy looks annoying."

"Why are you so mean, Kageyama?" Hinata looked hurt. "My stuffed toy is cute."

Kageyama looked away. _**You're the cute one, and not that hideous creature,**_ he thought while blushing. "Kinda looks like Kuroo."

"You think so?" Hinata stared at the plushie and smiled. "You're right! I guess that's why they named it Junior-kun?"

"Tch," Kageyama grumbled. "The name is annoying, too."

"S-shut up!"

"I'm just telling the truth â€" " Kageyama could not finish his sentence. He got too busy hauling himself out of a pretty deep pothole which neither of them noticed along the sidewalk.

"Kageyama!" Hinata held out a helping hand. "Are you okay?"

"The heck just happened?!" Kageyama could not believe he would fall

into a hole that evening. He grabbed Hinata's hand, and let her pull him out of the hole. Luckily he did not get injured. "They should have put a sign over there."

"Yeahâ€|"

Kageyama stood up, and brushed the dirt off his shirt.

"Damnitâ€|"

"Are you sure you're okay?" Hinata noticed the dirt on Kageyama's face. She grabbed a white handkerchief from her bag and began to clean him up, starting with his cheeks which suddenly became red as a tomato.

"W-what are you doing?" Kageyama asked. He felt her delicate hands brush against his skin as she rubbed the dirt off his face with her hankie. His heart seemed to skip a beat for some reason, and he could feel his cheeks burn.

"I'm helping you clean up, obviously," Hinata replied. She then added, in a teasing voice, "You look like a mess, Kageyama-kunâ€|"

"I-I can clean myself on my own!" Kageyama snatched the hankie from her and cleaned his face on his own.

Hinata, unaware of the turmoil of feelings inside his teammate, simply shrugged. "If you say so."

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Hinata brought Junior-kun again the next day. She really believed that the plush toy was her lucky charm. And why not? Everything seemed to go so well whenever she carried the kitten around.

Then again, not everyone was happy whenever they see Junior-kun around.

"Call me weird, but I think that thing's jinxing everyone," Tsukishima suddenly told Hinata.

Hinata held Junior-kun close to herself, and frowned at him. "Okay," she said, in an annoyed voice. "You're weird."

A vein pulsed on Tsukishima's forehead. To make matters worse, Tanaka and Nishinoya, who were eavesdropping from one corner of the club room, started to laugh.

"Seriously," said Tsukishima. "Everything is fine until you brought that toy here. Maybe that's haunted or something."

Hinata huffed in disbelief. "You're the last person I would suspect of being superstitious."

"I'm not superstitious. I'm just â€" "

"Paranoid?"

Tsukishima had had enough of the bickering. "I just want you to be careful!" he blurted out.

Obviously this conversation led to an awkward silence. Tsukishima furrowed his eyebrows in frustration, while Hinata was not sure whether she should be suspicious or touched by the tall blonde's spontaneous (and kind of unbelievable) thoughtfulness.

"You're not sick, are you?" she asked.

"I'm so done here," Tsukishima turned on his heel and left the club room, almost bumping into Nishinoya and Tanaka on his way out.

"What's the matter with him?" Nishinoya asked Hinata.

Hinata shrugged. "I don't know."

"He hates your stuffed toy since day one," Tanaka told the gingerhead. "Was it because it was from Kuroo?"

Nishinoya laughed. "Who knows? Maybe he really thinks Junior-kun is accursed."

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If there was a person who never believed in bad luck, it would be Nishinoya Yuu. Okay, that might have quite changed since Hinata magically turned into a girl, but really, he never believed that accidents were caused by sheer misfortune. And unlike Tsukishima, he never believed in stuffed cats jinxing everyone.

Then he himself got jinxed one afternoon.

It happened while he was on the way to the gym. He had to help out throwing away the trash during cleaning hours, and he had decided to take a shortcut to the club room by running down the sports field. It was supposed to be a safe route, down the sidelines, away from the soccer team having a practice game at that time.

"Noya-san!"

Nishinoya had to pause for a moment when he heard Hinata's voice. He quickly glanced about, searching, until he found her standing on the other side of the sports field. She was waving her left arm while her right arm caressed Junior-kun.

"Over here!" she shouted.

It was an adorable sight, Hinata smiling and waving at him. Nishinoya smiled back, unable to hide the happiness he felt deep inside. The Guardian Deity must have been a bit too happy, however, because he had not noticed an immediate danger: apparently one of the soccer

players entered The Zone, felt like he could become like famous football player Messi, and kicked the soccer ball a bit too powerfully. It swerved away from the goal, flew out of the field, and hit the side of Nishinoya's head instead. It was an instant knockout, sending Karasuno's libero to the ground.

"Noya-san!" Hinata quickly ran towards her senpai. The soccer players had gathered around Nishinoya, who was barely conscious, and has a reddish soccer ball-like pattern imprinted on his face.

"Noya-san, are you all right?" Hinata knelt beside Nishinoya, who finally opened his eyes.

"Wowâ€|" Nishinoya murmured, still dazed when he looked at the gingerhead. "You're so prettyâ€|"

Hinata, taking this as a sign of a probable head trauma, shouted to the people around her. "Quick, somebody take him to the clinic!"

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Nishinoya was quickly brought to the school clinic. He was not badly hurt, fortunately â€" nothing but a slight shock, said the doctor, and the Guardian Deity will be well by tomorrow.

"It's a good thing Noya-san was okay now," Hinata said. She and Kageyama were on their way home, together with the other members of the volleyball club aside from the seniors. Sawamura, Sugawara and Asahi had decided to accompany the libero on his way home.

"Rightâ€|" Kageyama replied. "Just how did he get hit by a soccer ball, anyway?"

Hinata shrugged. "I have no idea."

"You jinxed him, that's all." Tsukishima, who was walking with Yamaguchi behind them, spoke.

Hinata turned around and glared at him. "Are you still babbling about Junior-kun being cursed again?"

Tsukishima had a sour look on his face. He had a hunch that Kuroo did something with stuffed toy, and it was giving him and everyone else trouble. He doubted that Hinata would even realize that, though. "Whatever. I don't expect you to understand it, anyway."

"Hmâ€|" Hinata narrowed her eyes at him. "Are you saying that I'm an idiot?"

"Wow," Tsukishima smiled wryly at her. "You guessed that just now? You're smarter than I thought you were."

"Tsukishima you JERK!" Hinata dropped her bike and went after Tsukishima, who began to run away.

"Oi!" Kageyama yelled after her. "Stop running around like children!"

But Hinata and Tsukishima kept on running around, right in the middle of the road. The tall blonde kept on teasing the already furious short gingerhead, who persistently chased after him. It somehow annoyed Kageyama that Hinata easily falls prey to Tsukishima's insults, since the guy seemed to fancy making fun of Hinata.

"I said stop running!" Kageyama shouted. Up ahead, he noticed a pair of bright round lights. "Hey! Stop running!"

He just hoped that the two middle blockers would listen to him, because he was pretty sure there was a car coming their way.

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"Tsukki! You annoying lanky jerk!" Hinata seemed to have so much energy to spare, that Tsukishima finally gave up. He stopped right in the middle of the road, and the gingerhead finally caught up with him.

"You mean â€" lanky â€" jerk!" Hinata began to slap Tsukishima, who parried her attacks using his long arms â€" not that they actually hurt. Hinata was obviously hitting him half-heartedly; she was not a violent person, after all.

"Stop it," Tsukishima said, annoyed. He took a deep breath; the running exhausted him. He stood still to rest for a moment, when Hinata noticed the glaring lights of a mini truck coming their way at full speed. It didn't seem to see them, and it was not planning to slow down.

"Gyah!" Hinata yelped. "Oi, Tsukishima!"

"What?" Tsukishima looked up, and saw the oncoming truck. He froze for a second, but Hinata was quicker; she immediately grabbed him by the arm and pulled him to safety. The mini truck rushed past, almost hitting even their other team mates. Fortunately no one was hurt.

"What the heck was that?!" Tanaka shouted angrily at the truck once it was away. "Watch your driving damnit!"

"I-is everyone okay?" Yamaguchi looked totally frightened; he was shaking all over.

"Where's Hinata?" Kageyama asked anxiously.

"And Tsukki?" Yamaguchi said. "Where's Tsukki?!"

"They're over there." Tanaka pointed ahead. "Oi! Are you all right?!"

"Yep, we're fine!" Hinata shouted back.

"Oi," Tsukishima told her. "Let go of me."

It was then that Hinata noticed that she was still holding onto Tsukishima, both her arms were wrapped around him after she had dragged him away from the middle of the road. It was almost as if the two of them were cuddling.

Hinata immediately removed her arms from Tsukishima. "Are you okay?"

Tsukishima stared at her for a moment, before answering. "Yeah." He then added, as if for an afterthought, "Are you?"

"Yeah, I'm fine." Hinata replied.

"I told you, your stuffed toy's jinxed."

"S-shut up!"

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"How was your day?" Kenma asked that evening. For some reason Hinata could hear the concern in his voice.

"What's wrong, Kenma?" Hinata asked right away.

"N-nothing," Kenma replied. "Are you all right, Shouyou? Did something happen to you a while ago?"

"None." Hinata had decided not to tell about the truck accident; she did not want to make Kenma worry. "Why did you ask?"

"Umâ€¦did you bring Junior-kun with you?"

"Yep. Apparently he's my lucky charm. Why'd you ask?"

"Shouyouâ€¦maybe you should just leave the toy at home. Or better yet, throw it away."

"Huh?!" Hinata was bewildered. "Why?"

"Uhâ€¦wellâ€¦" there was hesitation â€" and a hint of fear â€" in Kenma's voice. "Kuroo said he bought the stuffed toy at a magic shop. It was like a cute version of a guardian spirit possessing an object. He also mentioned something about the stuffed toy capable of annihilating anyone who harms its owner."

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****Whew! I'm sorry for the long wait T^T ****

****Uhâ€|.tbh I was supposed to finish this right away, but I'm on a missionâ€|job hunt, to be more precise. I'm still jobless, and totally under pressure (being the eldest born daughter, it's kinda my responsibility to earn money right away). But I'm doing my best to update as soon as I can (I'm halfway done writing chapter 22, and I wrote this 21.5 as some sort of temporary distraction? LOL) so do please forgive me!****

23. Chapter 23

****xXMythiaXx: You know, there were a lot of other readers who have long requested the menstruation situation. It just took me a while to write one. ****

****Lunary: I'm glad you like Junior-kun!****

****SunsetChan: LOL, thanks. I'm glad you find the chapter funny.****

****Guest: Thanks, psychopath friend. I'll keep your vote in mind.****

****Everyone else: Oh, I ever thought there are so many readers out there waiting for my update! I'm sorry it took so long. And I couldn't be more grateful for your support.****

****Yep, I do think it's time to focus on NishiHina (for the sake of making this fanfic less of a freeform type). Though the final ship is still unknownâ€|****

****Now let's get back on track after that funny chapter 21.5.****

****I really, really appreciate all the suggestions you gave to me. I'm sorry this took pretty long, and my next update may also take a while (job hunt dears, I hope you understand).****

****Oh, and I might as well put in a showdown between Trash Kitty and Trash Alien.****

****And as an apology gift, here's a little surprise for yeâ€|****

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 22: Sparks fly (in a bad, horrible, scary way) â€" Part 1****

"We might as well give it a shot, don't you think?" Kageyama told the captain. He sounded hopeful and hesitant at the same time.

The members of Karasuno Highschool Men's Volleyball Team had gathered

for another meeting after practice. This time it was about their plan to raise funds in order for them to get to the island for the next training camp together with the City Boy Alliance. Hinata had decided to persuade Sawamura about the cosplay contest once more, this time with Kageyama as her backup.

"Daichi," Sugawara spoke slowly, being careful about his words so that he could help the freak duo in pleading their case. "I've read the mechanics of the contest. I think we can win even just the third or second place. It'll be more than enough to get us to the island."

Sawamura was tempted to agree with him, to allow the team to join the competition, but he was still doubtful. "But it's something we've never done. What if we lose?"

Silence befell the entire team. Of course, the captain has a point; none of them were truly into cosplay, thus joining such contest inevitably made them rather dubious.

"W-we won't know until we try, right?" Hinata blurted out all of a sudden.

Nishinoya, always the one amused by seeing others' optimism, laughed. "We might lose, but I think the contest is gonna be fun. If you guys are going to do it, count me in!"

Hinata's face brightened up. "Noya-san!" she smiled, delighted by the support coming from her senpai.

"If we're getting help from Nekoma, I think it's okay if we join!" Asahi muttered, occasionally stuttering as he spoke of his supporting Hinata's idea.

Sawamura thought for a long while, weighing the pros and cons. He then heaved a sigh. "All right," he finally said. "We're joining the contest."

"All right!" Hinata promptly jumped in joy and shared a high five with Nishinoya, who was grinning from ear to ear.

"That's great," Sugawara said happily. He suddenly seemed to remember something. "I know! Let's come up with a theme!"

All heads suddenly turned to Yamaguchi, who shyly raised a hand. Sugawara nodded at him, permitting him to say what's on his mind.

"I remember Hinata saying we should have an Alice in Wonderland theme." Yamaguchi said.

"Alice in Wonderland?" Sawamura raised an eyebrow.

"I've read that children's book before," Sugawara said, thoughtfully. "It has a lot of fun and interesting characters." He smiled approvingly at Yamaguchi. "I think that's a good idea."

"Oh, I know!" Hinata remembered Yamaguchi's picture book, and suddenly came up with an idea. She waved a hand up in the air to grab her senpai's attention. "Tsukki should cosplay as the White Rabbit!"

"Shut up," Tsukishima answered. He then came up with an idea himself. "You should be Alice, then," he said with a sly grin.

Hinata's face reddened, both in annoyance and embarrassment. "W-what? No way!"

"And I think Kageyama should be the King of Hearts," Tsukishima went on in a singsong voice while sneering at Kageyama. "It kinda fits."

If Tsukishima planned on razzing up the freak duo, he obviously had succeeded. Everyone could see the veins pulsing on Kageyama's temple.

"Are you looking for a fight?" Kageyama growled angrily at the gangly blonde.

Tsukishima smiled innocently at the freak duo. "I'm just making a suggestion."

"Stop fighting!" Sawamura said firmly. "We need to make this plan work. If we're going to join that contest, we have to aim for victory. Get it?"

Everyone else nodded in agreement. "Osu!"

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"So they finally agreed to join the cosplay contest?" Kuroo was actually amazed. "Wow. You guys surely need some money."

That night was, in a way, a milestone. It was the first time Kenma allowed Kuroo to chat with Hinata on the phone. Yet it wasn't as if the bedhead had not made many illegal phone calls to the ginger-haired beauty before. It was all meant to be some sort of business call; just about the cosplay event, nothing else. Not that Kuroo ever listened to Kenma's rules.

"Yeah, you're right." Hinata laughed. She was sitting on the edge of her bed, with Junior-kun sitting on her lap. She no longer brought the toy at school; it seemed that the curse of the stuffed toy only works against Hinata's own team mates. "We're kinda broke, so there's that."

Kuroo could not help but chuckle at her witty statement of the negative fact. "So what's the theme?"

"Hm—we're planning to have an Alice in Wonderland theme. What do you think?"

"Oh? That's easy. Kenma and I have a friend who leads the Drama club of his school. I'm sure he has a lot of costumes to lend to you."

"Really? That's great!" Hinata said in delight.

"I'm glad to be of help." Kuroo replied. "When shall I bring the costumes over?"

"Y-you're going to bring the costumes here?" Hinata said in disbelief. The bed head had done too much to help her and her team.

"Of course," Kuroo answered, offhandedly. "You have to make sure the costumes fit, right?"

"Yeah, I know, butâ€¦wouldn't that be inconvenient to you? You're coming here all the way from Tokyoâ€¦"

"Nah, don't worry. It's not a big deal." Kuroo then added, in a softer voice, "Anything for you, Shou-chan."

Hinata could not help but smile at the bedhead's eagerness to help, not really understanding that the guy was actually trying to win her heart. "Thanks, Kuro-chan."

"You're welcome. By the way, coach has nothing to do with this trip, so I may have an issue with the lodgingâ€¦"

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Hinata quickly reported to Sawamura about the costumes the next day. The two of them talked at the hallway on the third floor, where the third years' classrooms were.

"Kuro-chan said he's gonna bring the costumes here for the fitting," Hinata said. "He has a friend who owns a lot of costumesâ€¦"

"That's great," Sawamura replied. "When will he arrive?"

"Three days from nowâ€¦"

"Three days from now?" the captain frowned. "We'll be at the elementary school with Oikawa by the time he comesâ€¦"

"What? The volleyball tutorial is in three days?" Hinata scowled; she has to rearrange the schedule so that she can have time to meet Kuroo. "Okayâ€¦I'll just tell himâ€¦"

"By the way, Oikawa has sent the schedule of activities for that day. Both Karasuno and Seijoh will teach the children how to play volleyball. We are divided into groups of three, each with four children to tutor. Of course, we'll teach them the basics and stuffâ€¦"

"That's fine with me," Hinata replied. She was used to interacting with kids because of her sister, Natsu, whom she always takes care of.

"I think talking to kids is going to be easy for you, but the othersâ€¦" Sawamura had a melancholy smile on his face. He wasn't bad

with kids, and he was pretty sure Hinata, who has a little sister, can handle children as well. He was (inevitably) worried about the rowdy members of the team. Tanaka was a nice guy, but was known to scare many a gradeschooler; Kageyama, with his temper as unpredictable as an active volcano, was going to be trouble. Asahi was kind towards people, but with his adult look (as well as the rumors spreading around that he's been in high school for five years) it may take a while before they can persuade parents to entrust their children to him. Sawamura scowled when he thought of Nishinoya getting mad at kids pointing out his height. He didn't even want to think about Tsukishima and his propensity to bully children.

"Captain," smiled Hinata. "Everything's gonna be all right. Don't worry."

"I hope so!" Sawamura muttered in reply.

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"All right! Practice is on next week, same time. Don't forget!"

"Osu!"

While everyone else had to work together to clean up the gymnasium and put the equipment back into the storage room, Iwaizumi was going home early. He already asked permission from the coach, because he has a sick relative to visit at the hospital.

"Iwa-chan," Oikawa walked over to Iwaizumi, who was on his way to the club room to get changed after the volleyball team practice. "Don't forget the volleyball clinic with the children."

Iwaizumi stopped, and looked at him. "It's gonna be three days from now, right?"

Oikawa nodded. A wide smile spread on his handsome (but annoying, at least to Iwaizumi and a lot of other guys) face. "Yep. I'm glad you remembered."

"Why would I forget?" Iwaizumi was certain he would remember the volleyball tutorial; he still hasn't deleted the countless messages he got from Oikawa in his inbox. Then there were those annoying phone calls!

"Well! Iwa-chan shouldn't put a lot of things in his head because his brain cannot handle it!" "ow!" Oikawa pouted his lips indignantly after Iwaizumi promptly butted his head. "That hurts, Iwa-chan"

"Is that all you wanted to say?" Iwaizumi growled, angrily ignoring the question.

"Well, there's also the matter of grouping everyone into threes," said Oikawa, gingerly nursing his bruised forehead. "You're teaming

up with me, right?"

"Like I have a choice. Who's the other one, then?"

Oikawa smiled. Iwaizumi frowned at him, immediately sensing some sort of evil plan.

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The morning was bright, the weather was warm in a pleasant way. It was a nice day to play outdoors. It was exactly the perfect day to teach kids how to play volleyball.

"Okay, is everyone here?" Sawamura stood by the gate, facing his team mates. They all met in front of Karasuno High, where Takeda sensei awaited them, standing stoically beside the school bus parked at the front yard.

Takeda-sensei made a roll call of the team members. Everyone was there except the coach himself, and Hinata.

"Ukai-kun has to take care of the shop today," Takeda announced, rather apologetically. "So you'll have to do with me."

"It's all right, sensei. You will do just fine today." Sawamura encouraged the Literature teacher.

"Wait," Nishinoya spoke while glancing around. "What about Hinata?"

"Hinata's home wasn't far from the grade school where we'll hold the volleyball clinic," explained Sugawara.

Kageyama frowned disapprovingly. "Does Hinata really have to come with us?" he was worried that the ginger-haired shrimp was going to be in trouble because Oikawa would certainly be all over her once she joins the volleyball clinic.

"Well, if Hinata wants to go, he'll go." Sawamura answered, sounding as if the situation could not be helped (which apparently was true). "All right! We're lucky to be able to borrow the bus today. Let's go!"

"Osu!"

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The regulars of Aoba Josai had gathered at the front yard of the grade school where Oikawa's nephew was studying. Oikawa has been teaching the kids volleyball during summer vacation, and there has been an increase in the number of students wanting to learn the sport. Soon he had a hard time tutoring so many enthusiastic (if not

obstinate) children. Thus he planned a huge volleyball clinic with the help of fellow high school students, his own team and Karasuno.

Frankly, he could have asked the help of other schools, but obviously The Great King was plotting something.

"Thank you for helping me out!" Oikawa spoke cheerfully to his team mates, the regulars of the team who had spare time (or was unfortunately forced by Oikawa's non-stop persistence). "You guys are my real friends."

"We're doing this for the children," Iwaizumi answered coldly.

"Iwa-chan, you're so mean!"

"I don't see the guys from Karasuno anywhere," said Hanamaki.

Kindaichi frowned. "Karasuno? They're coming over?" Apparently this turnip-head was not happy at the prospect of seeing Kageyama or any of the enthusiastic crows.

"They're on their way," Oikawa answered Hanamaki's question offhandedly. "Now let's get moving! The kids are gonna be here any minute."

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Children were starting to pour into the sports field by the time Karasuno arrived. Seijoh players who were there were already setting up the volleyball court, and bringing out the other necessary equipment.

"I'm glad that you're finally here!" Oikawa welcomed the crows as they stepped down from the bus. He eyed every team member present among them, and had to arch his eyebrows in wonder. "Huh? Where's Chibi-chan?"

Kageyama flinched the moment the Great King noticed that Hinata Shouyou was not around. "Damnit!"

"Hinata couldn't join us, unfortunately." Sugawara lied, with a feigned smile on his face.

"Oh." Oikawa tried to look disappointed, and failed. "How unfortunate is that. Luckily there are enough teachers now that you're here!"

Nishinoya looked around in wonder. "Wait a minute. I thought Hinata's home isn't far from here?"

"Eh? I thought you said he won't come," said Oikawa, staring at the Guardian Deity in puzzlement.

Sawamura gave Seijoh's captain a taut smile. "He'sâ€¦talking about Shouko-chan."

"Oh?" Oikawa's face lit up. "Chibi-chan's cousin is going to help as well?"

"She kind of has a soft spot for children," said Kageyama, though he sounded as if it was the most revolting idea in the world.

Oikawa smiled at his former kouhai instead. "It makes sense. She's like an angel." He simply ignored Tsukishima, who looked as if he was about to throw up upon hearing him.

Iwaizumi walked over to them, arms folded across his chest in a stern manner which told Oikawa to shut up and get down to business. "Oi. Let's get started, Oikawa. We haven't got all day."

"He's right," Sugawara agreed. "We need to get moving."

"B-but what about Hinata?" Nishinoya asked. He was unable to hide his concern.

"It's fine if she's not here, I guessâ€¦" Kageyama murmured. "It's better if she's away from here, anyway."

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The ginger in question was actually on her way, biking excitedly along the road on the way to the volleyball clinic until the chains of her bicycle suddenly gave in and she was stuck on the side of the road trying to repair it. There was no saving her bike, unfortunately; the chain was totally snapped, and she had no spare. She was still far from the foot of the mountain crossing so there wasn't anyone who could help her either.

Hinata whined in disbelief. "Of all the days when this can happenâ€¦" she knelt beside her bike, looking at it as if she could magic the chain back simply by willpower and staring at it. Which, come to think of it, was not a bad thing, considering all the magical stuff that was going on in her life starting with her gender change.

Hinata slumped on the ground, finally giving up and heaving a sigh of defeat.

"It's hopeless," she said. "I guess I have to carry this thing with me all the way to the townâ€¦"

Then she heard a honking noise, and turned around to find a red van pull up behind her. A head poked out of the window of the front passenger seat, and Hinata immediately brightened up.

"Need a ride?" Kuroo Tetsurou asked her with a smirk.

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"We're lucky to find you along the way," Kuroo said. He sat at the passenger seat beside the driver who was apparently one of his friendly neighbors who can drive. "To be honest, I think we were getting lost." He looked behind, where Hinata was squeezed between Kenma and a tall, good-looking person with silky black hair.

Kenma took a moment to avert his eyes away from his videogame console to glare at the bedhead. "It's your fault for insisting that you remember the way. We have GPS nowadays, you know."

"You guys got here pretty early," Hinata told Kuroo. "You brought the costumes?"

"Yeah," Kuroo grinned, promptly ignoring his angry best friend in favor of the apple (ginger) of his eye. "They're in the boxes at the back, where those two morons are currently fooling around."

Hinata looked behind and saw Yamamoto and Lev, who were currently getting scolded by a fuming Yaku. Apparently the rest of the team had found out about Kuroo's sudden plan to visit Karasuno, and Mohawk and the Russian idiot insisted on seeing Hinata. Yaku was obviously there to keep an eye on them.

Hinata saw another boy whom she didn't know. He looked like a serious guy, with light brown hair held up with hair product, and an expression which faintly reminded her of Iwaizumi.

"Sorry for having to bear with them, Hori." Kuroo spoke in a not so sorry tone at the guy with the light brown hair.

"Hori-senpai, isn't this exciting?" the good-looking person sitting beside Hinata turned around, in an attempt to face the guy named Hori. "We're going on a field trip!"

"Shut up. This isn't a field trip!" Hori yelled in reply. "And don't move too much, Kashima, you're squeezing the others!"

"Hinata, I would like you to meet my friends," said Kuroo. "Hori Masayuki is the head of the Drama club of his school. He's the one who lends you the costumes â€" He grinned wickedly at Hori - "for free. And that annoying person sitting beside you is Kashima Yu, the drama club's leading _**man**_." He spoke the last word with a hint of sarcasm in his voice.

Kashima smiled charmingly at Hinata. "Nice meeting you, princess."

"Don't be fooled by the looks," Kenma spoke. "Kashima is a girl."

Hinata glanced at Kashima, jaw dropping in disbelief. "EEEEH?" she then noticed that despite having a handsome appearance that would have attracted a lot of girls, Kashima did have a feminine face. Hinata could not tell it straightaway, probably because Kashima was wearing a loose polo shirt and khaki pants, which didn't do much to

make her look less like a guy.

Kashima scratched the back of head sheepishly. "Yeah, butâ€¦I always do male roles in plays."

Hinata leaned in, peering at Kashima's face. "Are you changed?" the girl looked so androgynous; Hinata thought Kashima might be in the same situation as she currently was.

Kashima gave her a baffled look. "Huh?"

Kenma glanced at the gingerhead. He was the only one able to understand Hinata's question. "No, she's naturally a girl. She just looks like a handsome guy."

"Eheheh. Thanks for the compliment, Kozume-senpai." Kashima smiled at the blond boy.

"Kenma, stop complimenting her," Hori spoke sternly. "She'll start flirting with girls again."

"I'm not complimenting her," Kenma denied impassively.

"That's so mean!" Kashima whined with a hurt look on her face.

Kuroo eyed them through the rearview mirror, and laughed.

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The kid, a scrawny little boy who was probably a first-grader, pointed a finger at Nishinoya.

"Onii-san," he asked Oikawa. "Is that kid a transfer student? I haven't seen him before."

"HUH?!" networks of veins popped all over Nihsinoya's face. It took three people to stop him from approaching the kid. "I'm a high school student!"

Oikawa laughed at him. "Nope, he's not a grade school student, Koji. He's just a not-so-tall high school student."

Another three guys had to stop Tanaka from lunging at Seijoh's captain to avenge his bro.

"Tanaka, stop it." Sawamura hissed at his kouhai.

A girl glanced their way, puzzled by the commotion happening. "Suga sensei, what are they doing?"

Sugawara smiled kindly at her. "They're just fooling around. Let ' continue practicing receives, okay?"

"Okayâ€¦"

It was hard to tell how the volleyball clinic was faring; it seemed fine, thanks to the efforts of the saner volleyball players (i.e. Sugawara and Iwaizumi) but all in all it was just a comedy show between Oikawa and everyone whom he wanted to piss off.

"Tch." Kageyama watched the ruckus that was Oikawa, Tanaka and Nishinoya. Iwaizumi had to join in a few seconds later, kicking Seijoh's top setter in the ass. He had no choice but to display an act of violence in front of so many children. _**We're supposed to teach children right? Why are they acting so childish?**_

"Don't mind them," Sugawara replied. "Let's just get to work. We're here to teach the children, after all."

And Kageyama did as he was told; it was nice to divert from all the craziness going on, and besides, he didn't want to feel disturbed about Kindaichi glaring at him from afar.

"Um, has anyone seen Hinata â€" I mean Shouko-chan?" Yamaguchi suddenly asked.

Nishinoya turned towards them, remembering the gingerhead. "Come to think of it, she hasn't come here yet."

Sugawara frowned. "This isn't good. She would text us if she won't be able to come here."

Kageyama suddenly felt some sort of apprehension â€" was he worried about the dumbass gingerhead? The silver-haired senior had a point; if Hinata won't be able to come to the volleyball clinic, she would have at least texted. Chances were Hinata might be in danger.

"I'll go to their house!" Nishinoya volunteered.

Sugawara smiled at the Guardian Deity. "I think we should call her first."

"R-right." Nishinoya replied, abashed.

Sugawara glanced at Kageyama, who was already thumbing his phone.

Kageyama pressed the mobile cell against his ear, and yelled as soon as the receiver picked up. "Stupid Hinata! Where are you?"

"Kageyama?" Hinata answered. "We're right in front of the schoolâ€|"

**We?** Kageyama got puzzled. He then turned on his heel at the sound of a vehicle.

"What's going on?" Oikawa asked, staring at a red van pull up in front of the school.

Everyone gazed at the vehicle, wondering who had suddenly arrived.

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"What are we doing here?" Kenma asked.

"Sorry," Hinata answered him. "We have a volleyball clinic today."

"She's gonna teach kids today," said Kuroo.

Kenma eyed Kuroo, then Hinata. "Your basic skills are lousy, though," he said levelly.

Hinata pouted her lips indignantly. "That's mean."

Lev tried to lunge over the seat, and leaned over them. "Maybe we should go help teach the kids as well!" he spoke loudly, irritating everyone except Hinata.

"It's a nice idea, actually." Hinata smiled. "Come, the rest of the team is here."

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Oikawa watched the red van park in front of the school. The door of the van slid open, revealing a skinny blonde boy, who climbed out of the car. Hinata followed suit, then a tall young man with enthusiastic demeanor.

"Hinata!" he heard Kageyama shout. "Kenma?"

Another person appeared from the car, a tall, shrewd-looking guy with a crazy bed hair.

"K-Kuroo," Sawamura seemed utterly surprised.

Three more guys came out of the vehicle. The third year guys of Karasuno left the children for a moment to approach them.

"What's going on?" Iwaizumi asked Oikawa.

"I have no idea," Oikawa replied with a shrug.

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"You guys got here early." Sawamura tried to hide the surprise in his voice. "And you brought some of your team mates."

Kuroo glanced at Yaku, Lev and Yamamoto, who were happily chatting with Hinata, Nishinoya, Sugawara and Tanaka. "Yeah, wellâ€ they insisted. Besides, I think the group cosplay calls for team effort,

so I guess you're gonna need more men in your Wonderland Army."

Sawamura chuckled softly. "I guess you're right."

Kuroo nodded at Oikawa, whom he had noticed to be eyeing him from afar. "Who's that?"

"That's Oikawa Tooru, the captain of Seijoh. We're helping him teach kids how to play volleyball."

"Eeeh?" Kuroo smirked. "The captain whose team beat you at Inter-High? You're helping him out today? How ironic."

"Let me introduce you to them," Sawamura told him.

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Oikawa did not know who Hinata's companions were, and he didn't care; all that matters now was that Sunset-chan has arrived, and he would like to make a good impression on her.

"Hina-chan," Oikawa walked over to where Hinata was talking with the Nekoma boys.

Hinata turned around, and looked upon his handsome face.
"O-oikawa-san."

Oikawa noticed that the girl seemed nervous when she saw him; it might have something to do with the fact that he kissed her hand the first time they were introduced to each other. "Why so nervous, Sunset-chan? You're here to help teach the kids how to play volleyball, right?"

"I-I'm not nervous," Hinata answered in denial. Oikawa chuckled, and gently poked her left cheek.

"You look cute when you're nervous," he told her.

"You're teaching kids to play volleyball?" Yaku asked the Great King.

It was Sugawara who answered, nodding at Nekoma's libero in response. "It's a group effort between Karasuno and Seijoh."

"That's cool!" Lev exclaimed. "I wanna help!"

"Don't," Kenma spoke. "I bet you're lousier than the kids here."

Yamamoto, who was one for funny jokes, laughed out loud. "That's a good one, coming from you, Kenma!"

Hinata laughed as well, particularly at Lev pouting indignantly and Kenma glaring at the tall half-Russian in sheer exasperation. She then stared at Oikawa. "Oikawa-san, what do you think? These guys are

volleyball players from Tokyo, they can help us!"

Oikawa's heart fluttered; this girl with the sunset hair was surely an angel. "Sure. If your friends don't mind."

"Don't worry, we don't." spoke the shrewd-looking guy with the crazy hair.

"Oikawa, this is the captain of Nekoma High Men's Volleyball Team," said Sawamura.

The guy grinned at Oikawa. "I'm Kuroo Tetsurou. Nice meeting you."

"Same to you," Oikawa replied, feigning a smile. He felt uneasy talking to him.

"Kuro-chan, you sure you wanna help us?" Hinata asked Kuroo.

Kuroo smirked at Oikawa and then smiled at the gingerhead. "As I have said before," he fondly brushed Hinata's wild sunfire hair with his hand. "Anything for you, Shou-chan."

The Great King frowned in displeasure. Oikawa has encountered a rival.

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****Yep, folks, that's GSNK you're currently readingâ€¦ XD you'll probably encounter them throughout the cosplay contest arc.****

****#TheStruggleIsReal guys. seriously. Like, I'm still looking for a job and I'm on the verge of another writer's block, which is really, really horrible.****

****And one of the worst things that could happen to writers has happened to me: my laptop has to be reformatted, soâ€¦****

****Review?****

24. Chapter 24

****hiddenghoul: Calm down, dear. XD I appreciate your enthusiasm, and I'm glad you love my fanfic! And I'm also happy that you don't mind me writing an omake for an omake (lol)â€¦ I'm just wondering, do you have a grudge against Oikawa or something? I just noticed it when I read your reviews.****

****Mi-chan: Glad to help you refresh after your exam. Was it hard?****

****Yan801: Thanks.****

****EminaRukiax: Here it is!****

****Vale Yagami Cullen: Hi! I'm glad you liked my fic. Yep, we enjoy Haikyuu fics for the cute boys ;) ****

****Maxie: Calm down, Maxie-san. Hori and Kashima will appear in like, two or three more chapters? So keep breathing XD****

****jo: thanks. I thankfully overcome it.****

****KitsuneNaru: Thanks XD****

****HeyDaydreamer26: I'm glad you think it's detailed! I envy those writers who can put so many details in their stories (like Haruki Murakami, J.K. Rowling, Paulo Coelho, Cornelia Funke, Michael Crichton and Cassandra Clare to name a few), and to be honest I think I had adapted the writing style of Eoin Colfer (there are more moments when the characters talk). Thus I've been working hard to improve my skills in describing people, places and things (and monsters and fairies and so on). I'm happy that somebody has noticed my efforts.****

****Anime hotty lover.18: Thanks. I'm happy you are patiently waiting for my updates. Aaaaand here it is!****

****Lunary: You know I always listen to your ideas, don't you? ;)****

****Itachisgurl93: I'm not sure about Kashima's year in high school. ****

****Vivid Nemesis: I was pretty sure Oikawa has 6 (major) rivals - at the very least. ****

****notginnyweasley: Nope, you're not crazy! This is what everyone's been looking forward to (based on the reviews I've read before) and honestly, I've been looking forward to the Trash Showdown as well!****

****Guest: Thanks! I'm glad you find the latest chapter a good read.****

****Everyone else: I see that the ship war is on.****

****Hiyaaa! Thanks for the support! Here's my thank-you gift.****

****Douzo!****

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****Chapter 23: Sparks fly (in a bad, horrible, scary way) â€" Part 2****

"Cool," Kashima Yu exclaimed, quite energetically. "I didn't know volleyball is an awesome sport."

"Well, it is nice to get into sports," Hori, much to Kashima's own surprise, agreed. "Not only does it help you get fit, it also helps you make new friends."

Kashima and her senpai Hori Masayuki were standing at the sidelines, watching the volleyball teams from three schools: Karasuno, Nekoma, and Aoba Josai, as they teach grade school students how to play volleyball. Thanks to the addition of Kuroo and his companions, there has been a better distribution of kids to tutor. It has been decided that six children be assigned to each team of three tutors, so that there will be a volleyball game among the groups afterwards.

"I kinda wanna learn volleyball, too." Kashima had a dreamy look on her face which Hori (much to his own chagrin) found cute. That was, until she suddenly came up with an idea. "Maybe I should ask the girls' volleyball team at our school to teach me?"

Hori scowled at her. "If you do that, you'll distract them from doing volleyball practice just so that they can spend time with you."

"There's nothing wrong with that, is there senpai?" Kashima did not seem to get his point.

"Of course, there is!" Hori scolded her with a hard nudge on her right rib. "Not only will you distract them from practice, you will also lack time to practice for our play! You will ruin two clubs at once!"

Hinata noticed the captain of the Drama club beating up his leading lady (_**Or man? Does doing male roles make Kashima-san count as one?**_ She thought). She was staring at Kashima in particular â€" the girl seemed to be happy being a victim of domestic violence. "Are they okay? Looks like they're fighting."

"Nah, don't mind them," said Kuroo offhandedly.

"Hori always beat Kashima up for being stupid," Kenma added.

"Eh?" Hinata asked, baffled. "Shouldn't â€" shouldn't we stop them, then?"

Kuroo glanced somewhere else, right at the area where the Seijoh players were. "It looks like they're having fun over there, as well."

Hinata followed Kuroo's line of sight and saw Iwaizumi beating the crap out of Oikawa. Apparently the Great King had done something which annoyed the ace spiker again.

"Ouch! Iwa-chan, I was just â€" ow! â€" I'm just being honest!"

"So telling the others how bad I am at talking to girls without me knowing is your way of being honest?"

"But it's the truth â€" ow! Not the face, Iwa-chan! That's my moneymaker!"

"Shut up, Assykawa! Your moneymaker should be your volleyball

skills!"

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"Well then, let's begin!" Sawamura was the fatherly captain as always. "One of the most important skills to learn in volleyball is receiving. Remember, in volleyball it is important that you always _**connect**_."

"Sawamura-san's right!" Nishinoya, always the passionate libero, agreed obviously. "In order to be able to score points, as well as to keep your opponents from doing so, you need to be able to receive perfectly!"

The children seemed eager to listen to them, much to their surprise.

"Okay," Sawamura smiled at his students. "Let us teach you how to do itâ€|"

Noya grinned from ear to ear. "After that, I will teach you my special move â€" Rolling Thunder!"

Kids jumped excitedly after the Guardian Deity spoke, as if the guy had proclaimed that he was actually one of the members of Power Rangers, or that he was secretly saving the world as an Avenger. Sawamura suddenly felt anxious, wondering how on earth is Noya going to teach the kids to master a rolling receive in one day.

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"You know, the fun thing about being a middle blocker," Kuroo told the students that were assigned to him, "is that you get to piss your opponent off."

The children, who were apparently a bunch of obnoxious brats just like him, immediately understood the idea. They grinned almost the same way as Kuroo, looking so excited about the prospect of learning how to shut out an opponent just so that they gain the right to bully them afterward.

Tsukishima watched the bedhead and his demonic little brats, and frowned disapprovingly. Sure, Nekoma's captain was a pretty good teacher, but even a spiteful person like Tsukishima knows that there are some values which you should not teach to children. Like being a jerk, for example.

"He's still an asshole, even when it comes to teaching kids how to play volleyball," Tsukishima muttered.

"Tsukki, don't say that," Yamaguchi was always the one afraid to get

into real trouble. "He might hear youâ€|"

Tsukishima decided to follow his friend's advice, more likely because he had remembered Kuroo's equally demonic plush toy Junior-kun. The tall blonde had decided to take a look at the team where Hinata was; apparently they were a group of spikers, she and Asahi and Lev. Tsukki somewhat felt pity towards Karasuno's ace spiker, who happened to end up in the idiot group.

If there was anything good about Asahi joining forces with Hinata and Lev, it would be the fact that he was surrounded by two talkative and bubbly people â€" exactly the right kind of companions for a very nervous person like him.

"I'd say," Hinata spoke to the kids quite enthusiastically. "Spiking is the best thing about volleyball. When you jump and see the view on the other side of the courtâ€|it's indescribably amazing! And the feeling of slamming the ball past the blockers â€" it's so awesome!" she jumped excitedly as she gushed about how awesome spiking was, not that Tsukishima understood what she was so excited about.

Lev, however, seemed to get her point. "Yeah," he then added, "You get to hit the ball and then WHAM!"

"And then," Hinata went on, speaking out loud while using wild gestures. "The ball hits the other side of the court like, KABOOM!"

Tsukishima grimaced at the giant Russian and the little gingerhead. "What language are they using?"

"Well, they're kind of like birds of the same featherâ€|" Yamaguchi spoke fondly. A little boy tugged the hem of his t-shirt to get his attention.

"Nee, onii-chan," the boy said. "Could you please teach me how to serve?"

Yamaguchi stared at him and smiled. "Of course."

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Kageyama breathed in, and out. He told himself that can do it. He can survive this.

"All right," he told the kids who were assigned to him. "Let's learn the basics!"

He sounded pretty much like an army commander when he said that, so the children were naturally frightened to death, to say the least.

"What are you standing around for?" Kageyama tried to look placid; he ended up looking like a constipated gorilla instead. "Go get some volleyballs, and I'll teach you the basics."

"O-okay, sensei!" the kids scampered about, in case their tutor decides that they should be flayed alive for not moving right away.

Tsukishima could not help but smirk at him. "Using your despotic tone to make some poor little peasants submit to your will, King?"

"HUH?!" Kageyama glared at the tall blond middle blocker in return.

"Kageyama," Sugawara scolded the raven-haired setter. "You're scaring the kids. You should speak to them softly."

Kageyama frowned. "How am I supposed to do that?" he wasn't the kind of guy who communicates well, after all.

"Tsk, tsk." Oikawa apparently noticed Kageyama's surly behavior as well. "Tobio-chan, you're doing it wrong."

Hinata approached the boys. She then frowned at the raven-haired setter. "You're gonna be a bad father someday, Kageyama."

Kageyama instinctively held her skull. "You little æ" "

"Ow æ" ow æ" Kageyama, you're gonna crush my skull!" Hinata wailed helplessly.

"Looks like you're gonna make a horrible husband as well," Tsukishima quipped. "How are you supposed to find your own Queen, Your Majesty?"

"Shut up, Glasses!"

"Oh, great, now you're taking it all out on the girl?" Oikawa spoke a bit dramatically. "Tobio-chan, how could you?"

"What are you talking about æ" oi!" Kageyama turned around to face the Great King, but Oikawa was already somewhere else, his hands were already caressing Hinata's face.

"Are you okay, Hina-chan?" Oikawa asked the gingerhead, making himself the knight in shining volleyball jersey.

"I æ" I'm fineæ"|" Hinata answered, a bit warily.

"What the heck are you doing æ" " Kageyama fumed, and was about to start a war when he was suddenly interrupted by Kuroo.

"Shou-chan, are you all right?" the bedhead asked. "Come here."

"What? Why?" Hinata approached Nekoma's captain nonetheless, forgetting Oikawa for a moment. Kuroo gave her a once over, before patting her shoulders in a brotherly (though really, it's obviously not) manner.

"Shou-chan," Kuroo smiled at her. "You shouldn't allow any guy to harass you like that."

**You're the one who's harassing her,** Oikawa thought, pouting.

"Oi, oi, what are you guys doing?" Nishinoya stepped forward, arms folded across his chest. "Leave her alone, will you?"

"What? I'm just worried about her," Kuroo sneered at the shorter guy. "Just as you have always been worried about her all the time, eh, Guardian Deity?"

"What?" Nishinoya's face went red. "I â€" I'm _**not**_" he laughed out loud, but his voice was shaky. "You're joking, are you?"

"What kind of laugh was that?" Tsukishima raised an eyebrow. _**He's obviously in denial.**_

"Hey," said Sawamura in a stern voice. "We're here to teach children â€" "

"D-daichi," Asahi tapped Sawamura's shoulder. "L-look, Suga isâ€"|" "

"Huh?" Sawamura glanced at Sugawara, and shuddered in fear. No one has ever seen Sugawara in his darkest mood. The indomitable setter seemed ready to flay everyone alive. At the very least.

"S-sugaâ€"|" Sawamura swallowed in fear; not even he can stop the fellow third year once Suga decides to wreak havoc. No doubt the silver-haired setter can lay waste to them all.

"E-everyone, get back to your positions!" Asahi shouted in a panicky voice.

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"All right, everyone! Lunch time!"

Everyone left the sports field and lounged at the sidelines during break time. Some of the children sat under the cool shade of the trees, while others sat on the benches nearby. The volleyball players naturally grouped themselves according to their teams, sitting in a circle under the trees close to the field.

"That was quite a relief," said Iwaizumi. "They get to ask other players to help us."

Oikawa, however, seemed none too pleased about the sudden turn of events. The frown was evident on his face even while he was drinking from his water bottle.

"Is something bothering you?" Iwaizumi asked.

Oikawa shook his head. "Nothing."

"Okay."

"It's just that things aren't going according to my plan."

"I thought you just said 'nothing' a few seconds ago."

"Iwa-chaaaaaan," Oikawa looked as if he was about to cry. "My initial plan was to have Tobio-chan join our group so that I get to know more about Sunset-chan, but it was foiled by that guy with the weird hair!"

"What are you talking about?" Of course Iwaizumi knew about the plan to use Kageyama. Apparently Oikawa was stupid enough to think that his kouhai would spill some information about Hinata Shouko. He was actually surprised that Oikawa did not seem to think that Kageyama was a threat to him and his Sunset-chan, yet he believes that he has found a strong rival in one of the guys from Tokyo, that was, the dude with the crazy bed hair named Kuroo.

"That guy," Oikawa muttered. "I'm sure he has a thing for her."

"Huh?" Iwaizumi scowled.

"Iwa-chan," Oikawa leant in closely, in a conspiring manner. "Here's my new plan. I'll lure Kuroo into the storage room at the back, and you will use your deadly head butt to knock him out â€" ow!"

The Great King was shut up by a karate chop on the forehead, given by Iwaizumi.

"Like hell I'm gonna do that, you idiot!" he said.

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"He obviously likes her."

Kuroo had to glance at Kenma, who was silently chomping a piece of onigiri. "Excuse me?"

"Oikawa Tooru," Kenma spoke after swallowing his food. "He likes Hinata."

"Which Hinata are we talking about?" the bed-haired captain quipped.

Kenma stared into Kuroo's cat eyes. "The girl, of course." Not that Kuroo knew that the female Hinata was actually the boy Hinata Shouyo himself.

Hori stole a sidelong gaze at the two volleyball players while eating lunch together with Kashima and the others. He had somehow suspected that Kuroo has a thing for the lovely elfin girl named Shouko a long time ago. Being friends with the bedhead for more than two years made him understand that Kuroo never do favors for anyone, unless he was a close friend, or someone who truly catches his attention.

"Hori-senpai," said Kashima. "You gonna eat more?"

"No thanks, I'm full," Hori replied. He went on eavesdropping to Kuroo and Kenma's conversation.

"So what are you planning to do?" Kenma asked. The boy rarely had a readable expression on his face, but at that time he looked worried, much to Hori's surprise. "He looks like the kind of guy who doesn't give up."

"Yeah, well, they won't become a top team in Miyagi without that kind of attitude," Kuroo replied nonchalantly. "Not that I careâ€|"

Well, Kuroo does care, albeit slightly. It was hard not to, when Oikawa himself was glaring at him almost all the time.

Their conversation was suddenly interrupted by a commotion among the grade school kids. Two boys were quarreling near the sports field. One was a lanky kid who was Kuroo's student while the other was a cute boy who was part of Oikawa's group.

"Look," the lanky boy said. "The offense you set is going to be nothing once they are blocked. That's why middle blockers are awesome."

"Oh, yeah?" the cute boy replied. "Well, you can never block a well-planned attack. Setters plan all attacks. It takes a talented guy to become a setter. That's why they're the best."

"Oi, oi." Sawamura rushed to stop the two kids from arguing. "What's going on here? You two shouldn't fight."

Unfortunately, neither kid seemed to be listening to him. The other tutors began to surround them.

"What, wanna prove me wrong?" the lanky boy cockily challenged.

"Sure. It's not like you're gonna win," the cute boy replied.

"Hold on, you're gonna have a match?" said Hinata. "Just the two of you?"

"Well, this seems like a dÃ©jÃ vu, for some reason," Tanaka murmured.

"Of course not." The lanky boy told Hinata. "My bros are gonna back me up." and he gathered his fellow students, the obnoxious brats who trained under Kuroo.

"Well, then!" said the cute boy proclaimed. "I've got my homies as well."

"Ooh, a contest," Kashima gushed. "What's the prize for the winner, then?"

Everybody fell silent. The rival kids stared at each other for a moment.

"Come to think of it," the lanky kid said. "We should have a decent prize. Other than bragging rights."

"Yeah," the cute boy agreed.

"H-hold on," Hinata broke in. "Don't even fight in the first place!"

"I know!" the lanky guy blurted out. "Nee-chan gets to marry the leader of the winning team!"

"E-EHHH?!" Hinata was obviously flabbergasted. Just how in the world did she get involved all of a sudden?

"Aha!" the cute boy concluded, pointing an accusing finger at his enemy. "I knew it! You like Shouko nee-chan as well?!"

"Oi, oi," spoke Tanaka. "Just how the heck did things end up like this?"

"That's a sudden turn of events we have there," said Tsukishima. "Who would've thought Hinata's charm reaches even the youngsters?"

"S-shut up!" Hinata glared at the tall blond, though her face was red with embarrassment.

"Enough of that," Sawamura said. "We need to stop these kids from fighting."

"Looks like their teachers have handled things, nonetheless." Tsukishima said. He pointed at Kuroo and Oikawa, who loomed over the lanky kid and the cute boy. A strange dark aura surrounded the two captains, making them seem like a pair of demons.

"I appreciated your enthusiasm, kids, but aren't you overdoing this?" Kuroo asked, his eyes staring menacingly.

"Dating Hina-chan as the prize for winning the game?" said Oikawa. "You kids sure have guts!"

The two of them downright scared the hell out of their students. Hinata and the others simply stared in awe.

"Wow," Iwaizumi was honestly amazed. "They finally agreed on something."

"I never thought they would ever get along, really," said Kenma.

Hinata heaved a weary sigh. _**There is more than one spoiled brat in here**_, she thought.

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The fighting had been stopped, and the volleyball clinic went on

peacefully. They continued teaching the children for the rest of the afternoon. The tutorials ended up well.

The day had been exhausting, but seeing the smiles on the children's faces made Hinata and most of the other players feel that all their hard work was worth it.

Hinata stretched her arms and yawned. "Geez, teaching those kids drained me of all my energy!"

"You're saying that, and yet you managed to be so noisy even after we finished the tutorials," Tsukishima commented. "Are you even human?"

Hinata's face went red, in embarrassment and annoyance. "S-shut up!"

"Well, he does have a point," said Sugawara. "Everyone here looks tired, except for you, Hinata."

"I agree," Tanaka laughed. "You're still blooming and all, after a long day of work."

"Eh?" Hinata pouted indignantly. "I am exhausted, though."

Sugawara chuckled softly. "If you say so."

"Finally, we're done," said Kuroo. "All right, Shou-chan. I guess we gotta get goingâ€¦"

Hinata nodded in agreement. "Okay. My house is on that way."

"Uh-huh," Kuroo nodded. "Good. We still have time to try the costumes before the day's over." He looked over his shoulders at Sawamura. "See you at Shou-chan's house later, Cap'n?"

Sawamura nodded in reply. "We'll be there right away."

"Wait, you're coming with them, Sunset-chan?" Oikawa asked.

Kuroo smirked at Seijoh's captain. "Don't worry, I'm a fine gentleman. Besides," he glanced at Hinata. "Shou-chan here shouldn't go home by foot. We can't tire her chibi legs, no?"

"Now I'm being called Chibi legs?" Hinata raised an eyebrow. She did notice the names people have been calling her recently.

Kuroo smiled at the gingerhead. "Well, it sounds cute, at least." He patted her head fondly, much to the other boys' disapproval. "Ja, let's go then."

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****Yosh, I did a bit of editing there. Gomenasai. *grovelling intensifies****

Uh, to those who have been wondering what on earth took me so long. You seeâ€¦I finally have a job! It's a pretty demanding work though, but I promise to update whenever I can. ** Like, I swear, I'm trying so hard to keep on writing here. And yeah, I have also decided to use my Wattpad account (also aominecchi0831) but I only have one KuroTzuki fanfic there, so if you ship Kuroo and Tsukishima, feel free to read it! And I hope you vote for it as well :3**

Lol, Kashima is a masochist XDD

25. Chapter 25

Everyone else: Yo! I'm sorry this new chapter took soooooo long. I've been really busy lately. And I really had a hard time finding inspiration for the costumes. I actually resorted to watching Pewdiepie's unfinished video of Alice: Madness Returns. Hehe! Well, at least it's hereâ€¦

BTW, sorry about the error in grammar last chapter. The word was supposed to be prize, not price. But I already edited that part.

By the way, Abracadara is now also on Wattpad. Wellâ€¦the first two chapters, at least for nowâ€¦I'm actually doing a bit of editing on the Wattpad versionâ€¦not really much, but something to bring the existence of NishiHina from the very beginning of the story, perhaps? I just think that since Noya senpai is 'somehow' involved in Hinata's magical transformation, he should have better interaction with Hinataâ€¦not that I can fix that here, but that Wattpad version maybeâ€¦

Anyways, Douzo!

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Chapter 24: Plot Twist Incoming (Part 1)

Iwaizumi looked utterly pissed off. And why the heck would he not? He just had to endure an entire afternoon watching Oikawa pace around his room, plotting against the guy with the crazy hair named Kuroo Tetsurou, captain of Nekoma High in Tokyo and sworn rival in claiming the heart of Hinata Shouko.

"Oi." Iwaizumi sat on the floor, already exhausted and annoyed at the sight of his childhood friend doing stupid stuff. "Sit down."

Oikawa did not seem to hear him, nonetheless. The Great King kept on pacing back and forth, passing right in front of his childhood friend. Of course, as Iwaizumi is known for his short temper, he ended up sticking out his right foot and tripping Oikawa all over.

The Great King unceremoniously fell onto the floor, face first.
"Owâ€¦"

"I said sit down, Trashykawa," Iwaizumi said in a firm voice.

"Do you really have to do that? You're so mean, Iwa-chan."

"That's because you're not listening to me at all!"

"But you should understand, Iwa-chan!" Oikawa looked at him pleadingly. "The guy with the horrible bed hair is now getting the upper hand! I can't lose to _**him**_!"

"Just what the heck are you talking about?" Iwaizumi frowned. He had never seen Oikawa look so anxious before. He could not help but wonder at how much of a big deal it was for Oikawa to win Shouko's heart.

**Well, of course, it's a big deal, butâ€¦**|**

"How can you even be so sure he likes her?"

What Iwaizumi got for an answer was an annoyed look from Oikawa.

"Seriously?" Oikawa was pouting childishly. "Doesn't it look too obvious?"

"Wellâ€¦|" Iwaizumi glanced away, unable to deny or contradict his friend. It was true, after all; it was as if Kuroo did not bother to hide his affections towards the girl. It seemed pretty obvious to anyone, even to himself. Unfortunately, the only person who could not get the hint was Shouko herself.

"See? Even you could notice it. He's seriously courting her."

"Why are you so terrified about it? I mean â€" " Iwaizumi frowned as he spoke the following words " â€" I really, _**really**_ hate to admit this, but you're a true lady killer, Oikawa. You need not be bothered by a guy who's less worthy than you, right?"

"Yeah, it's true that I can easily attract a lot of girls, but she isâ€¦|" Oikawa glanced away. His eyes betrayed the lack of confidence in himself.

Iwaizumi's eyes widened at the sight of an anxious, blushing Oikawa.

"Shouko-chan, she'sâ€¦|" Oikawa muttered bashfully.
"â€¦differentâ€¦|from the other girlsâ€¦|"

Iwaizumi could only stare at his childhood friend. Since when did Oikawa become this doubtful about himself? He could not help but become speechless.

**My god**, he thought in amazement. _**This guy's serious.**_

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"Are you serious?"

Hinata could only say those words when Kuroo and the others had brought the costumes into the house. There were so many boxes filled with dresses, shoes, hats and accessories, they might as well start a costume selling business in the town. The bed-haired captain and the rest of his crew were all over the place, making sure to find enough space to put the boxes.

"Awesome!" Hinata exclaimed. She could not help but feel excited at the sight of the costumes. Her hopes of winning the group cosplay were somewhat high. "These are too much!"

"Actually," said Kuroo. "We thought these may not seem enough. You guys are doing a group cosplay, after all."

Hinata shook her head in disagreement. "Are you kidding? You brought more than enough!" There was no way she would think that Kuroo and Kenma, as well as the others, made little effort; they have even gone out of their way just to bring the costumes over.

"No, we did not," Kenma answered. He was the only one who was not helping with the carrying of boxes (Kuroo, in a scheme to make himself look more reliable in front of Hinata, told him not to). He sat on the veranda, thumbing his handheld videogame console. "We're not even sure if the costumes will fit."

Lev, Yaku and Yamamoto were helping Kashima and Hori carry some of the items out of the car. Hinata was certain she only asked for some costumes that fit the Alice in Wonderland theme, but there seemed to be costumes for kings, princes, and other characters as well.

"It's not like we can't do something about it," said Kashima. "We can simply adjust the costumes if they are too big or too small. Right, Hori-senpai?"

"Yeah, but that will be troublesome," Hori replied. He was busy checking the number of costumes they have.

"I can help with the sewing!" said Hinata. "I learned a bit from the Home Economics class!"

"Oh?" Kuroo smiled at her. "That's nice."

"Where should we put all of these boxes, Hina-chan?" Yamamoto asked.

"In one corner of the living room, I guess?" Hinata said. "Just make sure there is still space to walk around."

"Got it." the Mohawk-head took some boxes and went on his way.

"You're doing a group cosplay, Hinata?" said Lev. "What kind of cosplay will it be?"

"Alice in Wonderland," Hinata answered enthusiastically.

"Hinata," said Kashima. "I guess the other guys won't be arriving just yet. I just think you should try the costume on already. We'll see if there are adjustments needed to be done."

"Oh, right. Okay." Hinata glanced around in wonder. "What should I wear, then?"

"What do you mean 'what you should wear'?" Kashima whined. "You're Alice, obviously."

"EHHHH?!"

"I have seen all of the costumes, except for Alice." Kuroo glanced at Hori. "How does it look like?"

"Huh?" Hori thought for a moment, recalling. "I was pretty sure it was based on the Tim Burton movie of Alice in Wonderland, soâ€¦"

"H-hold on, I never said I'd be Alice!" shouted Hinata.

"Eeeh? But you seem to be a perfect Alice," Kashima replied.

"Hmâ€¦" Yaku muttered thoughtfully. "Makes sense."

Kenma stole a glance at Hinata, who seemed to be in panic mode. He could only heave a sigh. He pitied the ginger-haired elf more than ever.

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Right after going back home to change, the boys of Karasuno High have gathered to visit Hinata Shouyou's residence to have a meeting about the cosplay contest. It was also their chance to check out the costumes which Kuroo and Kenma had brought over from Tokyo.

"Costumes from a drama club?" said Sawamura. "Will it be all right, I wonder?"

"I think everything's going well," Sugawara answered encouragingly. "We're lucky that they're lending the costumes for free. Now it's up to us to make good use of those things."

"Right." He then turned to face the rest of the team. "Is everyone here?"

"Osu!"

"Good. Let's go."

The group had all met up at the Foothill Store. Once they were all there they had decided to travel to Hinata's house by foot.

"We still haven't decided the character roles," said Tsukishima.

"Wouldn't it be more convenient if we decide on who's going to wear what before the fitting?"

"We've decided to see the costumes first before assigning characters," answered Sugawara. "We should see which costume fits who. That way there'll be no complaints about who's going to take which role" he eyed Kageyama as if for example.

"I see." Tsukishima answered nonchalantly. Then, almost as if by afterthought, he smirked at Kageyama. "I still think Kageyama should be the King of Hearts, though."

"Huh?!" Kageyama gave the tall blonde a menacing look. "What are you saying, Rabbit?"

"Who says I'm going to be the rabbit?" Tsukishima glared at the raven-haired setter.

"Now, now. Calm down, will you?" Ennoshita was the one to stop the two boys from going at each other's throats.

"Hmm" Nishinoya thought about the character costumes. "I wonder which character would suit Hinata. Maybe Alice will do?"

"I think so too." Asahi told him with a smile. "I think Hinata would look cute as Alice."

Nishinoya thought about it. He tried to hide his blushing cheeks. "Yeah."

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"You're all here! Good!"

To be amazed was somehow an understatement when the boys of Karasuno reacted to how Hinata looked at that evening. The elfin gingerhead was donning an elegant light blue dress that is up to her knees, and her wild hair has been tamed into sophisticated red-gold ringlets. She looked like a daughter of a rich man, welcoming her suitors.

"H-hinata?" Nishinoya blurted out. He's probably the most talkative guy in the team, but it was quite an effort for him to say anything. The rest of the guys could not even utter a word.

Hinata's cheeks turned pink, which simply made her look prettier. "Kashima-san asked me to put on the Alice costume. How do I look?"

Nishinoya could feel his heart miss a beat. "Uh...well"

Hinata stared at the boys, expecting for an answer. She then caught the eye of Kageyama, who muttered something.

"beautiful," was the last word that came out of the setter's mouth.

"Eh? What were you saying, Kageyama?"

Kageyama glanced away. "You look normal."

"What an understatement," Tsukishima murmured.

"Aw, shut up, Glasses." Kageyama grunted irritably. "You have something to say about Hinata's costume?"

"I already said my opinion. I don't need to repeat it."

Yamaguchi watched his friend bicker with the raven-haired setter. He could not help but smile, because he noticed the slight change in Tsukishima.

Not only does he interact with Kageyama more, he even complimented Hinata

"Well, maybe it was all because of Hinata" he murmured thoughtfully.

"What are you muttering about, Yamaguchi?" Tanaka asked.

Yamaguchi jumped, and gave his senpai an awkward smile. "N-nothing!"

"Hey now, we're here to plan for the cosplay," said Sugawara.

"Right!" Hinata smiled her sunny grin. "Come in!"

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After piling up the costumes, Karasuno, Nekoma and the Drama club tandem had gathered in a single room for a meeting. With the help of Hori and Kashima, they began to set up initial ideas as to who should wear the Alice in Wonderland costumes.

"As I've said, Hinata is best meant for the Alice cosplay," Kashima spoke with a proud smile. "But as for the rest we decide by means of costume fitting. Though Kuroo-san has been suggesting that Kageyama become the King of Hearts"

Kageyama had to look daggers at Kuroo for suggesting the role of the King of Hearts. "I thought you said we decide after the fitting?"

"That was just a suggestion," Kuroo said innocently, though his smile was implying otherwise.

"Oh, come on, Kageyama," said Hinata. "It's just a costume I mean, just look at me. I have to wear the Alice costume!"

"Yeah, well" Kageyama did stare at the costume or at Hinata, rather. Who would dare take his eyes off such a pretty girl? Kageyama

himself could not help but blush. "You hardly have a right to complain! You look good in your costume!"

"Eh?" Hinata furrowed her eyebrows. "We wouldn't know if you look good in the King's costume if you don't try it on!"

"I agree!" Kuroo smiled. "I swear you'll look cool, Kageyama-kun!"

"What's with the Kageyama-kun?" Kageyama found the Nekoma captain more suspicious than ever before.

"Oh, come on, just try it!" Hinata grabbed Kageyama by the arm and dragged him into another room.

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"Where are we?" Kageyama had to glance around the small room he is in.

"My room," Hinata answered with a grin.

"Oh."

Hearing the ginger-haired beauty respond, Kageyama could not help but look around. The room was surprisingly neat, with a bed in one corner, and there was a study table nearby, piled with some books and what seemed to be an unfinished homework. A volleyball was left lying on the floor, looking battered as if it has been used for a million times.

***So this is Hinata's roomâ€|**_he thought fondly in spite of himself.*

*_**I'm here, in Hinata's bedroom. With Hinata.**_*

His heart began to race just thinking about it.

"Your face is red," Hinata noticed. "Is playing the role of the King of Hearts really that disturbing?"

Kageyama glanced away, hoping to avoid her gaze. "It's your fault for forcing meâ€|"

"I'm not forcing you, I just want you to try it on. It's just a costume, anyway." Hinata held out a box towards the raven-haired guy. "You knowâ€|I myself am averse to wearing the Alice costume. I mean, I'm still a guy at heart, so it's kinda awkwardâ€|" she smiled ruefully. "But if it's for the volleyball team, I guess I can handle itâ€|"

Kageyama stared at the gingerhead. Hinata remained lively as always even after her transformation that he began to forget that she was a guy. Realizing that fact, he thought it must have been hard for Hinata, after all. He could not help but feel sorry for the gingerhead.

Despite being reluctant about becoming a King, he immediately took the box from Hinata, who gave him a surprised look.

"What?" Kageyama said. "I just have to try this on, right?"

Hinata's bright smile reminded him of a light in the middle of darkness.

"Yeah," she answered with a nod.

Seeing her normal, cheerful demeanor, Kageyama sighed. "All right. Now get out."

"Huh? Why?"

Kageyama glared at her. His face went deep red again. "Because I'm going to change, dumbass. Get out."

"What are you, a high school girl?" Hinata raised an eyebrow. "You'll need help putting the clothes on."

"I can do this on my own."

"Are you embarrassed? We're both guys, remember? And it's not like I haven't seen that body of yours before in the locker room before."

"Just shut up and get out!"

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"Geez, they're taking their sweet time," Tanaka muttered while waiting for the freak duo who were in the changing room.

"Hinata's probably at her wits' end, hoping to make Kageyama wear the costume," Nishinoya said with a grin.

"Only Hinata can make him wear that costume," Sawamura said.

"Speaking of Hinata..." Yamamoto glanced around the room, puzzled. "I haven't seen that high jumping freak yet. Isn't this supposed to be his home?"

"That's right," Yaku agreed. "Where's Hinata Shouyou?"

Silence befell the boys of Karasuno. They could not believe that they have already forgotten that only they know of the whereabouts of Shouyou.

"Um, well..." Sugawara said. "Hinata had to visit some relatives, so he won't be here..."

"And he let us stay in his home?" Yaku replied, his eyebrows arched in wonder. "That's so nice of him."

"Shou-chan said it's all right," Kuroo said. "That way we no longer have to spend money on hotel stay."

"Rightâ€|" Sugawara smiled, and then he realized it. "What did you just say?"

Kuroo gave him a look. "What?"

"You said something a while ago. About the hotel stay?"

Deep inside Sugawara's mind, he was hoping he got it all wrong. He was wishing that he had misheard the mischievous bed-haired captain, and that Kuroo just made some errors in his sentence.

**No, no, no. he did not just sayâ€|**

"Oh, that." Kuroo grinned at the ash-haired setter. "I told Shou-chan we're gonna spend a few days here to help you guys out, so she offered us a place to stay. In this cozy house."

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Ohohoho. Sorry that was too short. I was hoping to upload this on Tsukki's birthday, but my boss just had great timing and asked me to write 30 articles (I'm not kidding). But oh, well.

So the Nekoma boys stay in Shou-chan's house. I wonder what happens next?

I'll make it up on the next chapter, I guess? I'll do my best to write something longer.

26. Chapter 26

xXMythiaXx: LOL it's okay. Osashiburi!

**Everyone else: YO! It's the season to be volley! **

I know this has been your Sunday ritual as well, but I watched the second season and it's SO. EPIC.

Ahâ€|well. This chappie's just in time (no, it's too late, actually) for Halloween!

#HQS2

Douzo!

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****Chapter 25: Plot Twist Incoming (Part 2)****

"Iâ€¦beg your pardon?"

Sugawara was, at the very least, devastated. If there was something he or the rest of the overprotective senpai squad could not accept, it would obviously be the idea that a persistent (not to mention scheming) suitor stay less than a few meters away from Hinata. And now here's Kuroo, who apparently managed to convince the innocent gingerhead into letting him stay in her house. How in the world did it happen, he had no idea.

The indomitable setter of Karasuno was obviously pissed off.

"You could have asked us, you know," Sugawara said with a feigned smile. "My home has a spare room. Not to offend Hinata, but their house is a little too small for all of you to sleep in."

"Oh, I'm fine with small spaces," Kuroo returned the fake smile with something that's less subtle. "I'm used to small rooms. Besides, it feels cozier when you snuggle up with your friendsâ€¦"

Sugawara could feel the veins in his forehead pulse in barely controlled anger. Despite keeping an angelic face, he was starting to think of satanic thoughts. ****Just who are you planning to snuggle with you jerk?****_

"What about Hinata's parents?" Suga asked. "Do they know about this?"

Kuroo nodded in response. "Yep," he said. "They said it's fine since Hinata Shouyou's dad is away on a trip. Shou-chan said that it'll only be she, Hinata's mom and little sister, so they thought it would be nice to have so many visitors to stay here for a while."

****Hinata's dad is away? ****_Sugawara thought, looking downright devastated by now. ****Just how lucky is this bastard?****_

Their discussion was quickly interrupted by a theatrical entrance provided by a certain little ball of sunshine.

"Lady and gentlemen!" Hinata suddenly jumped in, surprising everyone without a doubt.

"Oi! What's that for?!" they heard Kageyama yell from inside Hinata's room.

"Ssh, stay there for a moment," Hinata replied. She dramatically turned to face everyone afterwards. "Allow me to present to youâ€¦the awesomeâ€¦but cockyâ€¦geniusâ€¦but grumpyâ€¦"

"What kind of introduction is THAT?!"

"I said be quiet, Kageyama." Hinata went on with her theatrical introduction. "Karasuno's setter, Kageyama daioh-sama!" she looked over her shoulders and grinned. "Okay, you can come out now."

It took a while before the raven-haired setter was coaxed to get out of the room. Well, it was more like he was dragged out of the room

instead.

There was no denying it; Kageyama looked splendid in the King of Hearts costume. The colors of rich red and black are matched with pattern of the heart, very much like those seen in gambling cards. There was a quaint air of regality about him when he wore the costume; silence befell everyone, as if a king from a fantasy kingdom has truly arrived.

"Not bad," Kuroo was the first to speak, grinning proudly as he was the one to suggest the idea. "Not bad at all."

"See?" Hinata gave Kageyama an I-told-you-so look. "You look like a King! Not the dictator type thoughâ€|you look more like those kings that came straight from fairy tales."

"There are dictator kings in fairy tales too," Tsukishima quipped.

The freak duo glared at the eyeglasses â€"wearing blonde. "S-shut up!"

"Waah," Kashima gushed, sounding more like a girl for the first time. "You really look like a King! Cool! Hori-senpai, what do you think?"

"Your personality strays a little bit away from the original character, but I guess that's fine," Hori mused. "Girls would like to see a serious-type of ikemen, anywayâ€|"

"I think so too," Hinata agreed. "You heard that, Kageyama? You're good-looking!"

There is no doubt that the face of the raven-haired King immediately went bright red after hearing the words coming from the lovely little ginger-haired girl's lips. Kageyama averted his gaze and stuttered as he spoke: "I-it's not like I care, o-or anythingâ€|"

"Handsome?" said Tsukishima. "Hinata, should I lend you my eyeglasses?"

Networks of veins popped all over Kageyama's forehead. His clenched fists were shaking in sheer annoyance. _**This jerkâ€|**_

"Now, now," Kuroo spoke in a whisper. "Let's not get ahead of ourselves, okay?"

The words were spoken softly, as if for Kageyama to hear. There was no doubt that the bedhead himself was irritated for some reason. The raven-haired boy could not help but shudder as a cold chill ran down his spine. He felt as if he was about to be annihilated.

"Okay, who's next?" Hinata shouted, with a face that undoubtedly told everyone how much she was looking forward to see the guys in their costumes.

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"Huh? Me?"

Tsukishima furrowed his eyebrows in irritation. Hinata was grinning from ear to ear while looking at him with bright, brown eyes. There was no doubt that she had been looking forward to this moment: the first time that Tsukishima will wear the costume of the Rabbit.

"Why do I have to be next?" Tsukishima asked.

"Just do it," Kageyama spoke with a suspicious grin. It was pretty obvious that he was also into seeing Tsukishima in a costume; he had been looking for the moment when he himself could finally get even with the tall middle blocker.

"Come on, don't be a sissy," Hinata told Tsukishima. She held out a headband with a pair of huge, white bunny ears. Just the sight of it made Tsukishima cringe.

"Did you seriously **believe** I would wear that?"

"Why not? It's for our fund raiser."

"Come on, Tsukishima," Sugawara, always the one who tries to lift everyone's spirit, began to make use of his persuasion tactics. "Next to Alice, the Rabbit is one of the most relevant characters in the story."

Tsukishima knew there was no way he was going to get out of this situation, so he simply frowned. "Fine," he finally said, with an aura that says

'We-better-win-or-else-I'll-hate-you-guys-for-life'.

"Great!" Hinata giggled, especially when she saw Tsukishima's childish pouting face.

And so the tall, blond, and eyeglass-donning middle blocker of Karasuno finally changed into the costume of the Rabbit. When he finished dressing up and got out of the changing room, he was donning what seemed to be a whimsical (but still sharp) livery of a butler. It was an austere but handsome monochromatic attire of a silk black jacket which was softened by a golden watch with a chain in one breast pocket, and a pair of black-and-white checked pants. And of course, he had to wear the bunny ears which surprisingly looked good on him.

"So cute!" Yamaguchi could not help but gush, apparently digging his own grave. Sure enough, he earned death glares from his childhood friend right away.

"I think you look cute too!" Hinata told Tsukishima with all sincerity. "You could pull this one off awesomely, Tsukki."

Tsukishima eyed the elfin gingerhead for a moment. He then slowly removed the headband he was wearing. He placed the bunny ears over Hinata's head afterwards.

"You look cute, too," he told her.

Hinata's cheeks turned red. Tsukishima smiled at her.

"The bunny ears made you taller by a few inches, too," he added, just to piss her off.

"Youâ€|" Hinata glared at the tall blond middle blocker in irritation.

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They went on trying all the costumes that were available. It has been decided that Kageyama was going to be the King of Hearts, and Tsukishima would be the Rabbit.

"And of course, Hina-chan would be Alice," said Kashima.

"Hmmâ€|we still have a lot of other characters to cosplay," Sugawara said thoughtfully.

"There's Mad Hatter, the March Hare, Dormouse, Twiddle Dee and Twiddle Dum, the Caterpillar, and Cheshire Cat," said Tsukishima. "Honestly, there are too many characters too choose from."

"Cheshire Cat?" Hinata arched her eyebrows in wonder.

"The Cheshire Cat is a major character in Alice in Wonderland," said Yamaguchi. "He's like Alice's guide throughout the story, right?"

"He's quite the mischievous character." Tsukishima added.

Sugawara nodded in agreement. "Not to mention that he's also a shrewd and vague personality."

"Soâ€|we only need to find a guy like that, huh?" Hinata asked.

"Find one?" said Kageyama, speaking with all frankness that was expected of him. "Why bother? There's Kuroo-sanâ€|"

Everyone immediately turned their heads to face the bed-haired captain of Nekoma, and they all seem to come to an agreement. Apparently, the only one who was against it was the guy in question himself.

"Oi, oi," Kuroo grinned, but his eyes were not smiling. "Are you saying that I'm mischievous, shrewd and vague?"

"You're not far from it, though," Sugawara retorted icily, with an angelic smile.

"Oh, I think it will be great!" Hinata exclaimed. Kuroo flinched in surprise.

"Uhâ€|Hina-chan," Kuroo tried to find a way to get out of the

situation. "As much as I'd love to help you out, we really need to go back to Tokyoâ€|"

"That's a lie," Kenma suddenly spoke, nonchalantly dragging his friend down.

__**You traitor!**_ Kuroo thought, already planning how to get back at his best friend while feigning a smile. __**I bet you want to see me in a kitty costume!**_

"Aw, come on," said Kashima. "There's no harm in trying it, Kuroo-senpai."

"No harmâ€|" Kuroo frowned. He was about to give a retort when he felt a pair of hands around his arm.

"Kuroo-sanâ€|" Hinata looked upon his face with pleading eyes that seemed to shine with tears. "Please?"

Killing blow was given. There was just no way Kuroo could say no. __**Goddamnit.**_

"Uhâ€|wellâ€|" Kuroo heaved a sigh of defeat. "Fine."

Hinata immediately brightened up after hearing the bedhead giving his consent. Meanwhile, Yamaguchi whispered something to Tsukishima.

"Umâ€|" Yamaguchi sounded hesitant. "Did she justâ€|likeâ€|__**seduce**_ him into joining the contest?"

"Don't exaggerate, Yamaguchi," Tsukishima replied irritably. "I'm sure Hinata does not even know what seduction means."

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After half an hour of persuading Kuroo into the role of the Cheshire Cat, the bed-haired captain finally went into the room to try on the costume. At that time, the rest of the group continued with the character assignment.

"Another well-known character is the Mad Hatter," Hori spoke. She then glanced at everyone, and scratched the back of her head in confusion. "Who do you think would be suitable for that character?"

"Well, right now the only mad person I could think of would be Sugaâ€|" Sawamura muttered. Asahi could not help but smile in agreement.

"Did you say something, Daichi?" Sugawara suddenly asked, in a very light (but very threatening) tone.

"N-nothingâ€|" Sawamura replied hastily, scared that the ash-haired setter might go berserk.

"Would anybody like to volunteer?" Kashima asked.

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"Waaah, Kuro-chan you look cool!" Hinata exclaimed the moment Kuroo stepped out of the room.

Kuroo could only stand in silence and scratch his head as if without a clue, as everyone gawked at him while wearing the Cheshire Cat costume. It was not as flamboyant as that of the King and the Rabbit; just a quaintly designed long-sleeved dark purple shirt with horizontal stripes pattern and a pair of jeans that were stylishly torn in some areas. The only parts he didn't like were the black cat ears and the long black tail which he had to put on as well. He even had to put on a collar.

"Woah! Captain looks cute!" said Yamamoto.

"You want me to make you run 100 laps when we get home?" Kuroo told the Mohawk-haired guy. He then glanced at Hinata. "Shou-chan. Do I really have to do this?"

"You don't want to?" Hinata asked, looking at him with an appalled expression on her lovely face.

"N-no, of course I don't mind doing this!" Kuroo said with a smile, in order to keep the girl happy.

"He's hopelessâ€¦" Kenma murmured in disbelief.

"Tell me about it," Hori replied cynically while smiling in agreement.

"You seem to have the gaze of a cool cat, Kuroo-senpai, so I guess this won't be hard for you," Kashima said.

"Heh, easy for you to say, but I'm not an actor." Kuroo replied.

"It's all right, Kuroo-chan!" Hinata told him. "We'll be working as a team, so we can do this!"

Looking at Hinata's adorable happy face, Kuroo could only be affected by her contagious energy. He simply smiled at her in return.

**I really can't say no to you, can I?** He thought.

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When it was already late at night, they have decided to continue the meeting the other day. Hinata and her mother prepared a dinner for everyone, before they go home.

"So how long are you going to stay here?" Sawamura asked.

"You sound like you want us to leave right away," Kuroo chuckled.

"Oh, don't be like that. He's just asking." Sugawara gave a fake laugh. "But seriously, when are you going back to Tokyo?"

"You're quite a straightforward person, aren't you?" Kuroo chuckled unhappily.

Needless to say, there was tension in the air during dinnertime. The members of Karasuno and Nekoma did their best to keep the two madmen from murdering each other.

"Uhâ€¦Suga, you should eat more mackerel!" Sawamura spoke, giving Sugawara a plateful of grilled fish.

"Kuroo-san, why don't we plan for the next practice?" Yamamoto persuaded the bed-haired captain.

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After having dinner, the team decided to depart.

Oh, wellâ€¦not really.

"You're what?" Hinata arched her eyebrows at Sugawara.

"I was just thinking," Sugawara spoke with the sincerest of smiles. "You've done a lot for the team, you know. It's time for us to help as well."

"So," Kuroo sounded very unhappy, and for a good reason. "That's why you're suggesting that we sleep in your house instead?"

"Well, not necessarily all of you," Sugawara replied. "It's just that it must be inconvenient for the Hinata family to have too many visitors, when it is the entire team that has been troubling you because of the cosplay event."

"As I've said, it's nothing," Kuroo replied. "We'll be all right sleeping here â€" "

"You know, our house may look small, but Karasuno and Nekoma can actually sleep together in the living room," Hinata broke in. She giggled softly afterwards. "Maybe we should have a slumber party tonight!"

Kuroo suddenly looked petrified. He did not like the idea of a slumber party together with a closet psychopath like Sugawara. "Shou-chan, isn't it a bit late for that?"

"All right then," Sugawara suddenly exclaimed energetically. "Let's have a slumber party tonight!"

"EH?!" Both Hinata and Kuroo were obviously shocked; though Hinata looked happy while Kuroo looked rather horrified.

Thus the Karasuno-Nekoma impromptu slumber party began.

"Just how did we end up like this?" Tsukishima could not believe that he would end up wearing his pajamas for a sleepover at Hinata Shouyou's home, of all people. Just a while ago Sugawara suddenly took control of the entire team and decided that they have a slumber party together with the folks from Tokyo. It seemed that there was no stopping the indomitable setter; recently Sugawara seemed to be capable of laying waste to anyone who dares to get close to ginger elf Hinata.

"I don't understand what is going on, either," Yamaguchi replied. The two of them watched the livelier members of the team prepare the futons on the living room. Surprisingly, even with the piles of costumes around, there was still enough space for them all. Howeverâ€|

"It's cramped, and the futons were arranged like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle that were put together," Yaku commented by the time they were done placing the mattresses on the floor. "I wouldn't mind it at all, but Lev is hereâ€|he's too big."

"Sorry, I can't help it." Lev replied while laughing.

Yaku frowned. "Are you mocking us short people?"

"Oi!" Nishinoya pointed a finger at the half-Russian. "Tell us how you got too tall!"

"Oi, you are making too much noise," Sawamura scolded them. "It's already time for bed."

"Speaking of bedtime," Nishinoya glanced at Hinata. "Aren't you supposed to sleep in your room?"

"Eh?" Hinata looked mildly surprised. "Am I not joining the slumber party with you?"

"Eh?" Yaku said. "But you shouldn't sleep here."

"Why not?" Lev, who obviously could not understand the situation, wondered. "This is their home."

Hinata lowered her head in disappointment. "Is it because I'm a girl?"

Seeing the lovely little ball of sunshine looking so sad, Nishinoya felt a pang in his chest. He was used to her smiling face, thus he just could not stand seeing Hinata looking so lonely.

"Ah, wellâ€|" he said. "It's your house, so you can pretty much do what you want."

"Really," Yaku raised his eyebrows. "You think it is okay? We're all being a gentleman hereâ€|"

Nishinoya pretty much understood what his fellow libero was trying to say. "Wellâ€¦as for thatâ€¦I think Sugawara-san can deal with it."

"What do you mean?" Hinata and Lev asked.

"Ah. I get it." Yaku said. "I guess she will be safe hereâ€¦"

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"Uh," Hinata spoke in wonder. "I appreciate you guys including me in your slumber party, butâ€¦what's this?"

As it had been found out that Hinata would join the guys in the slumber party, there had been some 'rearrangements' made. It has been decided that Hinata would have the biggest space in the room â€" which also meant that the rest of them would have to sleep side by side like a can full of sardines. Her futon was arranged at least a meter away from the others'. Kashima was the only ones to sleep someplace else (she being a lady guest, she ended up in Shouyou's room).

"What's this?" Hinata scratched her head in confusion. "It's like I have a contagious disease or somethingâ€¦do I smell?"

"No," Sawamura answered her, while glancing suspiciously at Sugawara. "I'm pretty sure that is not the reasonâ€¦"

"I hate to say this, but, we can't give her all the space," said Tsukishima. "We might as well go home."

"No, it's already late," Hinata told him. "Let's just rearrange the mattresses."

"All right," said Sugawara. "Let's rearrange them!"

Needless to say, when Sugawara said 'rearrange' he also meant the positions where the rest of the guys would sleep. The ones sleeping on either side of Hinata were Yaku and Yamaguchi (who were the ones who did not show any signs of affection towards the lovely ginger), and from Yamaguchi, there would be the third years Suga, Sawamura, and Asahi, followed by Ennoshita, Nishinoya and Tanaka, and lastly, Kageyama and Tsukishima (much to the chagrin of the both of them). From Yaku, there was Hori, Kenma, Lev, Yamamoto, and (no surprises about it) the farthest one, Kuroo.

"This is an odd arrangement," Hinata muttered.

"Why am I the one closest to the entryway?" said Kuroo.

"It's time to sleep, everyone," Sugawara promptly ignored the bedhead.

"Oi."

"I'm turning the lights off, okay?"

"â€|You're ignoring me on purpose, aren't you?"

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After a cozy sleepover with Karasuno and Nekoma, Yamaguchi woke up to a nice and bright early morning. He blinked twice, and remembered that they were at Hinata's home. He then felt a weight pressing against his chest.

**A cat?* Yamaguchi could not help but wonder if Hinata has a pet which had decided to use him as a cushion to sleep on. He was totally shocked to find that it was no pet cat or anything â€" the weight was actually Hinata's head resting on his chest, and her slim arms wrapped around him as if he was a body pillow.

**H-h-hinata?!* Needless to say that Yamaguchi was petrified. His entire body shook â€" in fear and nervousness, for a lot of good reasons.

"Mmmâ€|" Hinata grumbled, rubbed her cheek against him like a kitten, and tightened her grip. Yamaguchi glanced to his left, and realized an even bigger nightmare.

He stared in fear at Sugawara, who was still soundly asleep.

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Aha. A new ship has (kinda) sailed. Lol Sorry for my sudden impulse to bully baby Yamaguchi.

Kenma the traitor. But who wouldn't wanna see Kuroo in a kitty costume? Hehehe.

Ah. You may have thought Suga has gone the way of the psycho here, but he's just being overprotectiveâ€|besides, isn't yandere!Suga adorable?

I'm sorry for the long wait. I hardly have free time with all the work I have to do, soâ€|

27. Chapter 27

Babasosis: LOL, I'm not sure how I portrayed Kuroo here, really, but anyway, thanks for enjoying my fic!

Amarante96: Of course, more Suga for you! XDD

**See For: LOL, more like pushing Yamaguchi to the edge of a cliff,

I'd say. I hope I made your five hours enjoyable. **

Kamiyuz: I have an fb account, as well as Twitter and Tumblr account. I'm not so active on social media tho.

To Guest-chan: Why, hello there, Madison. Thank you for appreciating my fanfic. I hope you start reading some more, because that's how most writers start, really. Here's the update for you.

To Everyone: I know you have been waiting for a LOOONG TIME, but anywayâ€|

Yeah, I kinda got into a situation where I just had to scream "FUCK THESE DEADLINES!"

I had to catch up on my articles (some of which I haven't submitted yet, and they're supposed to be DECEMBER articles, for gods' sakesâ€|

Yeah, wellâ€|I still wanna write fanfics more than press releases, editorials and blogs, so screw them. Though it may probably affect my salary. *cries*

Now, if only we can make money by writing fanfictionsâ€|TeeHee.

Sorry, I got so stressed I'm babbling stuff while writing stuff. Anyway, here's the chappie.

Douzo!

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Chapter 26: Plot Twist Is Yet to Come (Part 1)

Yamaguchi woke up to a lovely nightmare.

No, truth be told, it was an understatement. Yamaguchi was actually living in a nightmare that morning. He could hear his heart pounding in his ribcage, and his mind was reeling with thoughts of fear and a lot of other things. And why would he not feel that way? He had Hinata hugging him in her sleep, as if he had become her teddy bear or body pillow.

Now, that would not have been a bad thing (in fact it might have been quite a bliss for him), if it were not for the fact that the ash-haired lord of all things deadly in the world was sleeping next to him. Sugawara was in a deep slumber, his breath gently touching Yamaguchi's face, like a light-heartedly spoken threat saying that he will stab his freckles with an ice pick, one by one, if he caught him touching Hinata.

Talk about waking up on the wrong side of the bed.
(uhâ€|futon?)

**What should I do?* Yamaguchi was definitely panicking by now. He had been witness to some of Sugawara's shenanigans, and most of them wereâ€|painful, at the very least. It seemed that Hinata dug a grave for him, and Suga was just right there to bury him alive.

"Hi-hinataâ€|" Yamaguchi whispered, in such a weak voice so that his senpai wouldn't wake up. "Let goâ€|"

"Mmmâ€|" Hinata's eyes remained shut; she frowned, and hugged him even tighter.

"Oi," Yamaguchi was in full panic mode. "Hinataâ€|"

Hinata made a face, and pouted in irritation. It only made her cuter, and Yamaguchi would have found it adorable had he not been in extreme danger at that moment. "Five more minutesâ€|"

**Five more minutes?!* Yamaguchi thought desperately. _**I could get killed any second now!*_

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"What's that noise..?" Yaku Morisuke woke up after hearing some rustling noises and whispers. He blinked twice, and then his eyes widened when he saw Hinata and Yamaguchi snuggling. Well, it was more like Hinata snuggling Yamaguchi â€" the elfin gingerhead had her arms wrapped around the poor guy, who looked like a man suffering from despair, bliss, and constipation at the same time.

Yamaguchi met his eyes, and gave him a desperate look. Yaku quickly understood why; he knew that Sugawara was just an inch _**behind*_ the guy, and there's no doubt that the ashen-haired psycho setter of Karasuno is going to off him once he wakes up.

**Should I witness this?* Yaku asked himself. He then realized that if Suga wakes up and kills his own kouhai, he might get treated as an accomplice, or worse, get assassinated for being a witness.

Yaku abruptly closed his eyes, ignoring the pleading, distressed look on Yamaguchi's face for the sake of his own life.

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**Gyah! He ignored me!* Yamaguchi was aghast. He never expected Yaku to be an apathetic guy. Nekoma's libero promptly went back to sleep after seeing his horrible, nightmarish (but quite pleasant, though he was too scared at that point to even admit it) situation. He was all on his own, and he had to face Hinata and the deadly Sugawara.

**Oh dearâ€¦|what to doâ€¦|**

"Mmmâ€¦|what?"

Yamaguchi almost shrieked; he thought Sugawara already woke up. He then realized it was only Hinata sleep talking â€" quite a cute surprise for the pinch server of Karasuno.

"Youâ€¦|like me?" Hinata murmured. She looked flustered, and her cheeks were bright red.

"Whoâ€¦|" Yamaguchi first thought she was asking him â€" then realizing it was impossible, he got curious. There was someone else who was talking to her. _**Just who could be the person confessing to Hinata in her dreams?**_

And then Sugawara suddenly stir, and Yamaguchi promptly shove the gingerhead away in sheer panic. Fortunately, it was only a false alarm; the closet psycho of a setter did not wake up.

He wondered if this was what people felt when they had their near-death experiences.

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"Good morningâ€¦|"

"Hey now, wake up already!"

"Lev, goddamnit, your legs are getting in the way!"

"Huh? Ohâ€¦|sorryâ€¦|"

"Oi, oi, don't go back to sleep!"

It was pretty much expected to be noisy in the Hinata residence, what with all the rowdy boys waking up and getting wild first thing in the morning.

"Let's fold the sheets so that we can all start the day," said Sugawara, in an effort to quiet things down. He was surprisingly kind to everyone that morning. Yamaguchi let out a sigh of relief, knowing that the indomitable setter had not found out about the little incident a while ago.

"Thank goodnessâ€¦|" he murmured.

"About what?"

Yamaguchi inevitably flinched when Hinata spoke. The gingerhead stared at him in wonder; it seemed that she had no recollection of how she wrapped her arms around him like he was her boyfriend. Or favorite stuffed toy.

"N-nothingâ€¦|" Yamaguchi answered, feigning a smile.

Hinata arched her eyebrows. "You look constipated or something. You okay?"

"N-no, I'm fine," Slightly appalled by her remark, Yamaguchi quickly stopped giving her a fake smile. "I just wasn't able to sleep well, I guessâ€|"

"Really? I think it was just fine. I think I slept like a log!"

**You sure did,** Yamaguchi thought. He then remembered the words she said while she was sleep-talking. "Did you have any unusual dreams last night?"

"Me? I don't know," Hinata stretched out her arms and yawned. "I forgot it already, I guess. Oh, the morning is soooo nice!"

**So she doesn't remember.** Yamaguchi felt disappointed somehow. He wanted to know what her dream was â€" more importantly, who likes her.

**Come to think of it, there are many candidates hereâ€|**

It did not take much of an analysis to know the guys who had a thing for the elfin gingerhead, to be honest. It would only take one look to see the obvious. Kageyama and Nishinoya, for an instance, would instantly look beet red whenever Hinata spoke to them. And there was hardly anything else to say about Kuroo and Oikawa. The only thing they could have done to be noticed by the shorty middle blocker was to come up with a direct marriage proposal.

"Hmâ€|come to think of it," Yamaguchi said to himself. "Tsukkiâ€|"

"Yamaguchi?" Tsukishima was already up, and approached him. "What is it?"

"Oh, it's nothing, Tsukki." Yamaguchi gave him a smile. "I was just wondering if you already woke upâ€|"

Tsukki eyed him skeptically, and then yawned sleepily. "Tanaka-san was snoring so loudly, I could hardly sleep a wink last nightâ€|"

"HUH? Tsukishima you jerkâ€|" Tanaka growled at the now-smirking kouhai.

"It's way too early for you to fight," Sugawara scolded them. "We should help Hinata's family make breakfast instead."

"We're gonna eat here?" Tsukishima asked. It was apparent that he did not like to stay in the same house with his team mates any longer. "Isn't it too much of a favor for us to ask?"

"That's what I also think, but Hinata's mother insisted last night," Sugawara answered.

"I'll help Hinata buy ingredients for breakfast!" Nishinoya eagerly volunteered.

"Hold on," Kuroo broke in, not wanting to be left behind. "I want to
â€" "

"Oh, no you won't," Sugawara spoke to the bedhead with an icy smile.
"You stay HERE, while we help Shouko-chan buy some groceries."

"Nah, it'll be fine," Hinata spoke to the indomitable setter with her
ever-innocent bright-up-the-world smile. "The more the
merrier!"

"Okay. The others will get everything cleaned up here." Sawamura
spoke to everyone in a clear, stern voice. "All right, let's get
moving!"

"Osu!" was the immediate response he got from his
teammates.

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The shopping district opens early for all the shoppers, which was a
good thing for Hinata as she, Nishinoya and Sugawara went to buy
groceries for breakfast. The area was bustling with middle-aged
ladies chatting with the friendly shop owners, about the usual
things: food prices, the freshest picks, and a bit of gossip every
now and then.

"It's pretty lively here," Nishinoya remarked. "Just the way I like
it!"

"That's not surprising, considering how lively you are," Sugawara
chuckled.

"I want a TKG for breakfast!" Hinata yelled like a spoilt,
hyperactive child.

"Sure, but we'll need lots of eggs to feed everyone." Sugawara told
her. "So I think that's a bit inconvenient."

"I wish we can have ice cream for breakfastâ€|"

"What are you saying, Nishinoya? Of course you can't."

"What shall we have for breakfast, then?"

"Fish and vegetables would be easy to prepareâ€|" Kuroo suggested,
but in a murmur. He was talking like that since every word he comes
out of his mouth seemed to be a form of slander for the ears of the
crazed overprotective mother hen Sugawara. Sure enough, the
ash-haired setter started to glare at him as if he had spoken a curse
word.

"Yeah, that would be great!" Hinata seemed unaware of the tension
between the two third years. "There's this old man who always offer
me fresh vegetables at a discounted price!"

"Old man?" The animosity between them momentarily forgotten, both

Sugawara and Kuroo raised their eyebrows in curiosity.

"The vegetable shop is nearbyâ€|oh, there it is." Hinata ran towards a vegetable shop. There she spoke with a (Kuroo and Sugawara are definitely biased at this point) suspiciously grinning man in his forties.

"Oh, ojou-chan! You're here pretty early!" the shop owner was all smiles when he saw the elfin gingerhead.

"Uhâ€|" Nishinoya turned around, only to be shocked at the looks on his companions' faces.

"Lolicon?" Sugawara said, looking half-worried and half-angry at once.

"I bet he is," Kuroo remarked, his eyes glaring daggers at the middle-aged man.

Just to make sure, the three of them observed as Hinata bargained with the vegetable shop owner. Everything seemed to be going fine; Hinata greeted the middle-aged man like they knew each other for a long time.

"Oi, oi," Kuroo murmured when he saw the shop owner pat Hinata's head. "Is he molestingâ€|?"

"Should we call the police?" Sugawara asked anxiously.

"Don't exaggerate, you twoâ€|" Nishinoya could not help but feel worried; it seemed that the two third years were beginning to become a bitâ€|narrow-mindedâ€|when it comes to the situation.

"But isn't he a bit too close?" said Suga.

Nishinoya gave them a look. Being protective of Hinata is one thing, but being suspicious of an innocent shop owner is entirely something else. "It's not like he's groping her or anything butâ€|"

"Sugawara-san!" Hinata waved at the boys. "Yasai-san will give us a discount if we buy lots of his vegetables!"

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"I can't believe you got suspicious over a shop ownerâ€|" Nishinoya murmured after they bought vegetables from the middle-aged man who turned out to be innocent. "Apparently he was a friend of Hinata's momâ€|"

"Well, we can never be certain of that, right?" said Sugawara, smiling innocently as if he was an innocent angel who hadn't had any ill intentions towards men who get close to the elfin ginger-head.

"Just because they are slightly related doesn't mean he is not a bad

person or something," Kuroo murmured in agreement with the silver-haired setter.

"You two only get along when it comes to 'protecting' herâ€|" _**If protecting meant trying to slay anyone threatening Hinata's chastity, that is,**_ thought Nishinoya.

The three boys are walking right behind Hinata, who was the one busy dealing with the sellers at the market. At that moment she was happily chatting with an old lady who sells fish, all while bargaining for a lower price. Her cheeks went pink when the lady seemed to tell some joke, which the guys were not able to hear. At that moment she looked like a young, newlywed wife who was preparing the favorite meal of her working husband.

"How cute," Kuroo smiled, gazing at her in a smitten manner. Nishinoya eyed the girl as well; he could pretty much relate to the captain with the bed hair.

But remembering how Hinata had turned out like this, Nishinoya could not help but feel a bit guilty.

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It was breakfast time after they came back from shopping. Hinata's mother prepared a Japanese breakfast of fish, soup, and rice for everyone to dig in.

After giving thanks for the hospitality of the Hinata family, they all began to chow down the delicious food. Of course, being the rowdy boys that most of them are, the loud chatting, exchanging of insults, and occasional yelling at each other began right away.

"Eh?" Hinata asked, flustered. "Practice acting?"

Kashima nodded eagerly in response. In order to put an end to the other guys' bickering, they decided to talk about the cosplay while in the middle of breakfast.

Hinata frowned. "I don't get it. What for?"

"Well," Hori-senpai answered the question for his kouhai. "This idiot thinks that you should practice acting like the character you're portraying, in order to have a better chance at winning the cosplay contest."

"Just think about it," Kashima told Hinata. "Cosplay is like theatre, because you wear costumes and play the role of a certain character, right?"

"It's called cosplay for a reason," Kenma muttered nonchalantly.

"He does have a point," Sugawara agreed. "Besides, there's nothing wrong with it, I think."

"Hmâ€|but how do I do that?" Hinata was definitely baffled. "I've

never done acting before."

Tsukishima snorted, something which did not escape the gingerhead's eyes. Hinata immediately threw a furious look at him.

"Maybe we try doing it later," Sawamura suggested. "We might as well try to practice too."

"W-wait, we gotta act too?" Kageyama looked petrified.

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Hinata felt lost. For one, she had no idea how to practice acting. And secondâ€¦

"Umâ€¦do I really have to put on my costume?"

She was starting to think that people in the world of theatre areâ€¦a bit strange. At the very least.

"Why, of course!" Kashima answered. "You need to get into your character right away."

Hinata could not find a sensible reason for her to put on her frilly blue dress before the cosplay event. To make things worse, Kashima went all out and tried out different hairstyles to find out which suits the Alice cosplay. She stood in front of the audience all dolled up; sunset-colored hair curled into elegant locks and a light lip gloss for a natural and youthful look.

She was blushing in embarrassment, but little does she know that it made her look all the cuter in the eyes of the guys.

"Uhâ€¦how do I..?" As she had no acting experience, she naturally had no idea what to do.

"Have you read the book?" Hori-senpai asked.

"I bet you didn't," Kageyama said. "You volleyball-brain."

Hinata pouted her lips indignantly. "You're one to talk."

"Wellâ€¦cosplayers are more like models, so maybe you could start with posing?" said Kashima.

"Posing?"

"Yeahâ€¦we can take pics so that we get to see how you can pull off the character."

Kuroo's ears perked up upon hearing Kashima's words. "Mind if I help?"

"We're not here to fill your mind with fantasies," Kenma reprimanded

him.

"Oh, come on, it's not like I'm a perv â€" "

"You **_**are**_** a pervert."

Kuroo frowned at his childhood friend. "You big bully," he said, half-heartedly.

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****Sorry guys, this was meant to be a bit longer, but it's been A LOOOONG WHILE since I last updated.****

****Woah. Seriously. It's been a while. I gotta be honest; I think I'm putting my fanfics on hold (at least until I have free time to write chapters). There's just too much workload for meâ€|and to think that I was hoping to become a successful novelist someday
*cries*****

****Anyone noticed that shitty title? It's not that I could not come up with a decent title for the chapter, it's just that I'm up to something and I thought too fast forwardlyâ€|if there's such a word.****

****Anyway, thank you so much for the support :3 I really appreciate it.****

****Danke!****

End
file.